

Strange Messenger

by Michelle Dockrey and Tony Fabris

Capo 1

Em Cmaj7 He was exploring South America, the first to venture there
Em Cmaj7 In an age of change and reason, new discoveries everywhere
Am Em Along the Orinoco, the great river corridor
Am B7 B7 He heard tell of a people who had fled a tribal war

Em Cmaj7 It was said they chose seclusion over death or life as slaves
Em Cmaj7 But in their sheltered grotto, he found only simple graves
Am Em And one brightly colored messenger, whom no one understood
Am B7 B7 Spoke the language of a people who had disappeared for good

C Em So tell me, bold explorer, as you wandered through the leaves,
C B7 B7 Did you ponder unknown losses that the very Cosmos grieves?
Em C Was it halting? Was it flowing? Was it lilted and divine?
Am B7 Was it fearless as your native tongue, mercurial as mine?
C Em Would it pique a linguist's interest? Would it hold a poet's thrall?
Am B7 B7 Em Cmaj7 Did the words of one strange messenger tell you anything at all?

Em Cmaj7 He kept a careful chronicle, transcribing what he heard
Em Cmaj7 Of the tribe's entire language, there remained just forty words
Am Em Complexity and structure, how it tastes and how it sings
Am B7 B7 Time devoured all but scattered words for scattered things

Em Cmaj7 And can we archaeologists, with bits of sound like runes
Em Cmaj7 Ever paint a living portrait of a people in their tombs?
Am Em Could we somehow come to know them? Will we ever even try?
Am B7 B7 Sifting through linguistic ruins for the clues to how and why

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Em C Was it halting? Was it flowing? Was it lilted and divine?
Am B7 Was it fearless as your native tongue, mercurial as mine?
C Em Would it pique a linguist's interest? Would it hold a poet's thrall?
Am B7 B7 Em Cmaj7 Do the words of one strange messenger tell us anything at all?

Em Cmaj7 To those who study history, it seems a bitter curse
Em Cmaj7 The loss of language terrible, the lost potential worse
Am Em Past and future stories multiplied a thousandfold,
Am B7 B7 Vanished out of history and never to be told

Em Cmaj7 Were they beautiful and gentle? Would they call us friend or foe?
Em Cmaj7 What wisdom did they live by? What secrets did they know?
Am Em A symphony reduced to what a single bird can sing
Am B7 B7 The forest lost their language, and they lost everything

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Am B7 B7 Em Cmaj7 Do the words of one strange messenger tell us anything at all?

Standard chord forms for all chords in the song. The one unusual chord is this:

