

Devil and the Feathery Wife

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The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Devil and the Feathery Wife". The score is written in 6/8 time and consists of two systems. Each system has a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). Below the treble staff is a bass staff with a key signature of one flat. The first system contains 8 measures of music. The second system contains 8 measures of music. The bass staff includes a 6/8 time signature and a large number 8 below it. The music is accompanied by a series of rhythmic patterns and fingerings indicated by numbers (0-5) and dots below the notes.

Now there was an old farmer lived over the hill
and a poor old fellow they say
He was plaged by a scolding wife
the worst misfortune that day

And as he cut wood in the forest one day
between dark mood and despair
The Devil himself, he jumped out of the bushes
and stood before his mare

"What's the matter,"the Devil, he cried,
"You look so discontent
Haven't you got any money to buy your food
Or to pay your landlord rent?"

"What would you give me,"the Devil, he cried,
If I were to end your debate
And I gave you money and gear enough
So you'd never more want for meat"

"But I've nothing to give you,"the old man cried,
"I've nothing right here to my hand
But if you would do what you say for me
I'll be at your command"

"Right and I'll make you a bargain,"the Devil, he cried,
"A bargain you just couldn't miss
You bring me a beast at seven years end
I'll try to say what it is

"But if that beast I name aright
You mark what I do tell
You've got to toddle along with me
To view the ovens of Hell"

So the old man prospered and prospered well
It was all gained and spent
Till he came to the end of seven long years
Sorely he did lament

"Oh, what is the matter?" his wife, she cried,
"You look so discontent
Sure you've gotten some silly young girl with child
Making you sore lament"

"No, I've made a bargain with the Devil," he cried
"It was a bargain I just couldn't miss
I've got to bring him a beast at seven years end
He's got to say what it is

"But if that beast he names aright
You mark what I do tell
I've got to toddle along with him
To view the ovens of Hell"

"Oh, never you worry," his wife, she cried,
"Be it happens, you'll pay for your deed
For the wit of a woman, it comes in handy
At times in an hour of need

"Go and fetch me the droppings from all of our chickens
And spread them all over the floor
Stark naked I will strip myself
And I'll roll all over the floor

"And fetch me the barrel of feathers," she said
Of the beasts we had for our tea
And I'll roll and I'll roll all over in them
Till never an inch be free"

So she rolled and she rolled in feathers and droppings
from her head right down to her navel
By Christ, he said, what a terrible sight
She looked far worse than the Devil

Then the Devil himself came in
He began to steam and to hiss
"By Christ," he said, "What an awful sight
I'll be damned if I know what it is"

He started to shake and he started to quail
Saying, "Have you got any more of these at home?"
"Oh yes," he said, "I've got seven more
That in my forest do roam"

"Well if you've got seven more of these beasts
That in your forest do dwell
I'll be as good as my bargain and I'll be gone
She's worse than the demons in Hell"