

The Jealous Husband Well Fitted

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A hosier lived in Leicester, as I've heard many tell,
He had a handsome witty wife, that loved him full well,
But he was touched with jealousy, as often you shall hear,
Which caused his handsome witty wife for to shed many a tear.

Each night he'd go a-drinking, and roving up and down,
And often it was midnight before he came home.
And when he did come home at last he'd curse and call her whore,
And threaten her at every word to turn her out the door.

One day above the rest, he in a jealous pet,
Began to curse and call her names, and she began to fret,
At length a scheme came in her head, thought she "I'll try the same,
Perhaps my conjuration his jealousy may tame.'

The hosier, then, as usual, at night a-drinking went,
And she to try her fancy it was her full intent,
She took a hairy jacket, and cloven shoes we find,
With two large horns upon her head, and a long tail behind.

A chimney sweeper lived nearby, and straight to him she went,
And told to him her fancy, and what she did intend,
She says, "You have two hearty boys as any of the kind,
And with their help I'm certain that we can change his mind."

She took the two sweeps home with her, or so many have said,
She dressed herself just devil-like, and so she went to bed,
The one she placed behind the door, for to let him in,
The other she placed by the fire, for to burn his skin.

So presently he came home as drunk as any owl,
Began to curse and call her names, and speak words very foul,
Saying, "Whore get out of bed, and bring to me a light!"
Straightway the sweeps came crawling in, which put him in a fright.

This drunken jealous husband was frozen with surprise,
With that they let some gunpowder explode in his eyes,
His wife, the hairy jacket on and cloven shoes we find
With two long horns upon her head, a-seizing him behind.

"O spare me, Mr. Devil, O spare me now I pray

And every fault that I have done I'll mend another day;
O spare me Mr Devil, and you little devils all,
For if ever I'm jealous of my wife, then you may come and call.

"Well if you'll give your promise a good husband to be,
And kind unto your loving wife, and use her tenderly,
My little devils I'll take off and so bid you farewell,
But if you're jealous of your wife, I'll drag you down to hell."

She laid her hairy jacket by, and of it took great care,
The sweeps they kept the secret close, her husband ne'er did hear,
If anything did happen they were to come again,
But he proves a good husband, and saves them all their pains.

From My Song Is My Own, Henderson " From an eighteenth-century
broadside ballad; tune: The Butcher and the Chambermaid"

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