

To Beat The Devil

Waylon Jennings

It was winter time in Nashville
Down on Music City Row
I was lookin' for a place to get
Myself out of the cold
To warm the frozen feelin'
That was eatin' at my soul
And keep the chilly winds off my guitar.

My thirsty wanted whiskey
And my hunger needed beans
But I guess it'd been a month of payday
Since I heard that eagle scream
So with a stomach full of empty
And a pocket full of dreams
I left my pride and stepped inside a bar
Actually I guess you'd call it a tavern
Cigarette smoke to the ceiling
Sawdust on the floor friendly shadows.

I saw that there was just
An old man sittin' at the bar
In the mirror I could see him
Checkin' me and my guitar
He said come up here boy
Show us what you are
I said I'm dry, he bought me a beer
He nodded at my guitar.

Said it's a tough life ain't it
I just looked at him
And he said you ain't
Makin' any money are you
I said you been readin' my mail
He just smiled and said let me see that guitar
I got somethin' you oughta hear
Then he laid it on me.

If you waste your time a talkin'
To the people who don't listen
To the things that you are sayin'
Who do you thinks gonna hear
And if you should die explainin'
How the thing they complain about
Or the things they could be changing
Who do you thinks gonna care.

There were lots of other singers
In the world turned deaf and blind
Who were crucified for what they tried to show
Now their voices have been scattered
By the swirling winds of time
And the truth remains that no one wants to know.

Well, the old man was a stranger
But I'd've heard his song before
Back when failure had me locked out
On the wrong side of the door

No one stood behind me but my shadow on the floor
And lonesome was more than a state of mind

You see the devil haunts a hungry man
And if you don't wanna join him
Well, he's gotta figure out someway to beat him
And I ain't sayin' I beat the devil
But I drink his beer for nothin'
And then I stole his song

You can still hear me singin'
To the people who don't listen
To the things that I am sayin'
Prayin' someone's gonna hear
And I guess I'll die explaining
How the things that they complain about
Are things they could be changin'
Hopin' someone's gonna care.

I was born to be a singer
And I'm bound to die the same
But I've got to feed this hunger in my soul
If I never have a nickel
I won't even die in shame
'Cause I don't believe that no one wants to know...