

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Oh Death (3)

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Just look, just look, just look, see what the Lord done, done
Just look, just look, just look, what the Lord done, done
Just look, well, Lordy, just look, just look what the Lord done done
Lord, I know, Lord, I know my time ain't long

It was soon one morning, oh, Lordy, when death come in the room (x3)
Lord, I know etc

Oh, hush, oh, hush, oh, hush, oh, hush, somebody's calling me (x3)
Lord, I know etc

It was soon one morning, oh, Lordy, when death come in the room (x3)
Lord, I know etc

Oh, death, oh, death, oh, death, oh, death done stole my mother and gone (x3)
Lord, I know etc

Oh, move my pillow, then turn my bed around (x3)
Lord, I know etc

Oh, hush, oh, hush, oh, hush, oh, hush somebody is calling me (x3)
Lord, I know etc

Source: original recording by Patton and Lee (Charley Patton and Bertha Lee) New York City 1 February 1934. Issued as Vocalion Vo 02904.

The above transcription is as printed in John Fahey 'Charley Patton' Studio Vist a 1970.

Charley Patton's 'Oh Death', done with Bertha Lee, is nothing like Dock Boggs' version. Patton's recording may be found on the late John Fahey's magnificent compilation 'American Primitive Vol 1: Raw Pre-War Gospel' Revenant 206. It is also on Charley Patton 'King of the Delta Blues' Yazoo CD 2001. Bertha Lee takes the lead with Patton supplying vocal interjections. Stephen Calt and Don Kent put it well in their notes to the Yazoo: 'The call and response format, with the bottleneck as a third voice and the simple but foreboding text, creates an eerie if not disturbing atmosphere.'

PS