

# To Beat The Devil

Kris Kristofferson

A couple of years back, I come across a great  
And wasted friend of mine in the hallway of a recording studio  
And while he was reciting some poetry to me that he'd written  
I saw that he was about a step away from dyin'  
And I couldn't help but wonder why  
And the lines of this song occurred to me  
I'm happy to say he's no longer wasted and he's got him a good woman And I'd like to dedicate this to John  
and June

Who helped show me how to beat the devil  
It was winter time in Nashville, down on music city row  
And I was lookin' for a place to get myself out of the cold  
To warm the frozen feelin' that was eatin' at my soul  
Keep the chilly wind off my guitar  
My thirsty wanted whiskey, my hungry needed beans  
But it'd been of month of paydays since I'd 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 could call it a Tavern  
Cigarette smoke to the ceiling and sawdust on the floor  
Friendly shadows  
I saw that there was just one old man sittin' at the bar  
And in the mirror, I could see him checkin' me and my guitar  
An' he turned and said, "Come up here boy, and show us what you are"  
I said, "I'm dry", he bought me a beer  
He nodded at my guitar and said, "It's a tough life, ain't it?"  
I just looked at him, he said, "You ain't makin' any money, are you?"  
I said, "You've been readin' my mail"  
He just smiled and said, "Let me see that guitar  
I've got something 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 think's gonna hear  
And if you should die explainin' how the things that they complain about  
Are things they could be changin', who do you think's gonna care?"  
There were other lonely singers in a world turned deaf and blind  
Who were crucified for what they tried to show  
And their voices have been scattered by the swirling winds of time  
'Cause the truth remains that no-one wants to know  
Well, the old man was a stranger, but I'd heard his song before  
Back when failure had me locked out on the wrong side of the door

When 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  
If you don't wanna join him, you got to beat him  
I ain't sayin' I beat the devil, but I drank his beer for nothing  
Then I stole his song  
And you still can 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 explainin' how the things that they complain about  
Are things they could be changin', hopin' someone's gonna care  
I was born a lonely singer, and I'm bound to die the same  
But I've got to feed the hunger in my soul  
And if I never have a nickle, I won't ever die ashamed  
'Cause I don't believe that no-one wants to know

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