



*No wealth, no land, no silver, no gold--nothing satisfy me
but your soul."*

*"The old, the young, the rich or poor, are all alike with
me, you know.*

My wealth is all at your command, if you will move your
icy hand."

"Oh Death, consider my age, please don't take me at this
stage.

REFRAIN REPEAT

You hurt my body, you make me cold, you ruin my life
right out of my soul."

"Oh Death, how you treating me, you close my eyes so I
can't see

My head is warm, my feet is cold, Death is moving upon
my soul

My Mother come to my bed, place a cold towel upon my
head

REFRAIN REPEAT

What is this that I can see with icy hands taking hold on
me?

*"I am Death and none can excel, I'll open the door to
Heaven or Hell."*

REFRAIN: Oh Death, Oh Death

Can't you spare me over 'til another year
Oh Death, Oh Death

Please spare me over 'til another year

"Oh Death", someone would pray, "Could you call some
other day?"

"The children's prayed, the preacher preached, the time
of mercy is out of your reach."

*"I'll fix your feet so you can't walk, I'll lock your jaw so
you can't talk*

*Close your eyes so you can't see, this very hour come go
with me."*

*"Death, I come, take the soul, leave the body and leave it
cold.*

*To drop the flesh off of the frame, the earth and worm
both have a claim."*



Moran Lee Dock,"
Boggs is considered
a pioneering folk
musician, even
though he spent a
lot of his life work-
ing as a coal miner.

He was signed to Brunswick Records for
a short period of time in the late 1920's,
but it would take another 30 years for
him to be rediscovered (this time by
Folkways Records) and only then did he
really get chance to dedicate his time to
music.

Oh Death appeared on one of the first
records he recorded for Folkways which
was a self-titled effort issued in 1964.



While Boggs
was familiar
with the
clawhammer
style, or
"frailing", he
typically
played in a

style known as up-picking, which in-
volves picking upwards on the first two
strings and playing one of the other three
strings with the thumb.

He played several songs in a lower D-
modal tuning and developed a technique
which was considered "a style possessed
by no other recorded player!"



Zines about Kentucky Folk songs

Oh, Death

Or, Conversations with Death



References:

[https://thelisteningpost-
blog.wordpress.com/2023/03/26/song-of-the-
day-dock-boggs-oh-death/](https://thelisteningpost-blog.wordpress.com/2023/03/26/song-of-the-day-dock-boggs-oh-death/)
Short bio of Dock Boggs.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O_Death
Wiki article on the song and its history
[https://teeniecampbell.com/lyabbse/
index.php?topic=9676.0](https://teeniecampbell.com/lyabbse/index.php?topic=9676.0)

Lyrics and tabs.

[https://mainlynorfolk.info/peter.bellamy/
songs/conversationwithdeath.html](https://mainlynorfolk.info/peter.bellamy/songs/conversationwithdeath.html)

History of the various versions of the song.

Song suggestions

I've Endured
The Falcon
Little Omie Wise
Barbry Ellen

Grant me but this, and I will ask no more.

I'd live to see her wed, whom I adore

I have a daughter beautiful and fair,

Fain would I stay, if thou my life wilt spare

A little longer time to live and reign

Death, be not so severe, let me obtain

daughter, Catlin."

in-law, aged 27, to cancer: she left a three-year old

versions particularly poignant, having lost my daughter-

On a personal note I find one verse in the old broadside

bers.

Boggs who had a predilection for dismal sounding num-

sion here was inspired by Virginia banjo-picker Dock

around in Britain since the late 16th century. The ver-

comparatively recent American manifestation) has been

"The ballad Death and the Lady (of which Oh Death is a

on their WildGoose CD Return Journey. He noted:

known as Rattle on the Stovepipe) sang Oh Death in 2002

Dave Arthur with Pete Cooper and Chris Moreton (later

abandoned the still [but only temporarily]."

took Aunt Lizzie to be a ghost and in terrible fright

near a conceded underground still. The moonshiners

gathering herbs in the woods. One day she wandered

"Elizabeth, her mother, used to sing this sad song while

notes commented:

Legacy album Girl of Constant Sorrow. The album sleeve

Sarah Ogan Gunning sang Oh, Death in 1965 on her Folk-

ger on 26 June 1963.

Dock Boggs of Norton, Virginia, sang Oh Death to Mike See-

contexts, including films, video games, and television.

In the region. The song has been covered in a variety of

to the musician and Baptist preacher Lloyd Chandler, but it

was likely taken or adapted from folk songs already existing

the Roud Folk Song Index. The song is generally attributed

traditional Appalachian folk song, listed as number 4933 in

"O Death", also known as "A Conversation with Death", is a