

Bessie Smith

"Safety Mama"

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Let me tell you how and why what no-good man done to me

He called me pretty, young and wild, after that he let me be

He'd taken advantage of my mouth, and that you understand

So, wait a while, show you, chile, just how to treat a no-good man

Make him stay at home, wash and iron,
tell all the neighbors he done lost his mind
Give your house rent shake¹ on Saturday night
Monday morning you'll hold collectors good and tight
You see a man you really like
Let him bite that monkey, brother, in his back
When his cruel heart turn, his love breaks down
hold him where you got him make him stay in town,
'cause I'm a safety woman, lookin' for a safety man

Make him stay at home, help me wash and iron,
the neighbors know he done lost his mind
I give a house rent shake on Saturday night
Monday morning I held collectors good and tight
I seen a man I really like
I let him bite that monkey, brother, smack in his back
When his cruel heart turn, his love breaks down
I hold it where I had it and he stayed in town,
I'm a safety woman, and I had to have a safety man

I ain't good lookin', I'm built for speed
I've got ev'rything a pigmeat needs
'Cause I'm a safety woman, lookin' for a safety man

Note: having a house rent party was popular way of raising the money to pay the rent to the landlord or lady as well as other bills like gas, electricity and water.

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