

Blind Willie McTell

"Scarey Day Blues"

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My good gal got a mojo, she's tryin' to keep it hid
My gal got a mojo, she's tryin' to keep it hid
But Georgia Bill² got something to find that mojo with

I said she got that mojo and she won't let me see
She got that mojo and she won't let me see
And every time I start to love her she's tried to put that
jinx on me

Well, she shakes like the Central³ and she wobbles like
the L&N⁴;
She shakes like the Central and she wobbles like the
L&N
Well, she's a hot-shot mama and I'm scared to tell her
where I been

Said my baby got something, she won't tell her daddy
what it is
Said my baby got something, she won't tell her daddy
what it is
But when I crawls into my bed, I just can't keep my
black stuff still

Note 1: tryin' to keep it hid, the concealment of the
mojo hand is what has led to confusion about the
meaning of the word. Many acoustic rural blues songs
of the 1920s-30s refer to mojos, among them a dozen
that carry a floating verse about "keeping a mojo hid".
Since the least conspicuous way for a woman to wear a
hidden mojo is hanging from a string under her skirt -
or, as Coot Grant put it, above her knee - a male blues
singer is making a double entendre when he declares
he's going to find that mojo. It's a sexual joke, but the
mojo itself is not sexual;

Note 2: Georgia Bill, the reference in the third line to
"Georgia Bill" is explained by the fact that Willie
Samuel McTell recorded for several competing labels
under an assortment of pseudonyms including
Georgia Bill, Hot Shot Willie, Blind Sammie, and
Barrelhouse Sammy. "Scarey Day Blues" was a

"Georgia Bill" recording, cut in Atlanta in October, 1931
for the Okeh label;

Note 3: Central, probably the the Illinois Central (I.C.)
railroad line running from Miami (Florida), through
Jacksonville and Birmingham to Chicago (Illinois).;

Note 4: L&N, the Louisville (Kentucky) & Nashville
(Tennessee) Railroad (L&N) was chartered March 5
1850 and a 186 mile line was opened between its
namesake cities on October 27, 1859.

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