

Ethel Waters

"If You Can't Hold the Man You Love"

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My sermon for the Sabbath Day,"
Said Parson Johnson Brown,
"Is going to of interest to every gal in town;
Mandy Lee has done told me
Her man is gone away.
That will be the subject
Which I'll preach about today."

If you can't hold the man you love,
Don't cry when he's gone;
If you can't keep a good man down,
Don't you carry on!
First I want you gals to know
A little fact I've known,
It takes more than a radio
To keep a man at home!
And some night when you're alone,
Waitin' for the dawn,
Listen, sisters, listen while I warn, doggone:
You can't mail a letter if it isn't stamped,
You can't reform a man, but he can be revamped!
If you can't hold the man you love,
Don't cry when he's gone!
You can't hold a bird unless you feed him seeds,
You can't hold a dog without the bones he needs,
If a monkey don't get peanuts, why, you'll find him
gone;
You can't hold a chicken 'less you feed him corn;
You can't hold a seal unless you feed him fish,
You even got to grant a baby's slightest wish,
And just as sure as there's a lord above,
You can't hold a man unless you give him love!

If you can't hold the man you love,
Don't cry when he's gone;
If you can't keep a good man down,
Don't you carry on!
The secret, ladies, is to know
Just what your man desires,
Learn to cultivate the tastes
His appetite requires.

And some night when you're alone,
Waitin' for the dawn,
Listen, sisters, listen while I warn, doggone:
You better get wise, realize the truth!
Keep your home fires burnin' for your flame in you,
If you can't hold the man you love,
Don't cry when he's gone!
I'm preachin',
Don't cry when he's gone

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