

Maggots in the Sheep Hide

Traditional

Arrangement (c) copyright 2012 by Donald J. Borchelt

Prelude D

D
A 4
F# 4
D
A

Open position break

4
D A7 D

6
G D A7

9
D D

11
G D

14
G D

17 G D A7 ⊕

1. D | 2. D Up the neck break Harmonics

20 G D A7 D Harmonics

23 Harmonics G D A7

26 1. D | 2. D

29 G

31 SI 12 12 14 14 12 14

Detailed description of the guitar tablature: The piece is written in standard guitar notation with six strings and a 12-fret neck. It consists of several measures, each with a chord indicated above the staff. Measure 17 starts with a G chord (1-1-0-2-0-1) and includes a harmonic (H) on the 2nd fret. Measure 18 has a D chord (2-4-0-0-0-0) with a slide (SI) from the 2nd to the 4th fret. Measure 19 features an A7 chord (0-0-0-0-1-0) with a pull-off (Po) on the 1st fret and a harmonic on the 2nd fret. Measure 20 begins with a G chord (0-0-0-0-0-0) and includes a bar line. Measure 21 has a D chord (0-0-0-0-0-0) with a bar line. Measure 22 contains harmonics on the 17th fret (17-16-17-12-12) and a D chord. Measure 23 starts with harmonics on the 13th fret (13-12-12-14-14) and a slide (SI) from the 14th to the 17th fret. Measure 24 has a G chord (15-10-0-0-0-0). Measure 25 features an A7 chord (12-12-17) and harmonics on the 12th fret (12-12-17). Measure 26 begins with a D chord (16-17-0-12-12-13) and a harmonic (H) on the 12th fret. Measure 27 has a D chord (12-12-14-14-17) with a slide (SI) from the 14th to the 17th fret. Measure 28 contains a G chord (15-10-0-0-0-0). Measure 29 starts with a G chord (0-0-0-0-0-0) and a bar line. Measure 30 has a G chord (0-0-0-0-0-0). Measure 31 begins with a bar line and a slide (SI) from the 10th to the 12th fret, followed by a quarter note (1/4) on the 12th fret. The piece concludes with a G chord (14-14-12-14) on the 14th fret.

The musical notation is presented in three systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system (measures 34-36) includes a 'D Harmonics' section with notes 12 and 12 on the treble staff and 12 on the bass staff, followed by a 'G' section with notes 13, 12, 14, 12, and 13, and a final 'D' section with notes 10, 12, 12, and 0. A 'H' (harmonic) is indicated above the first measure of the G section. A 'Sl' (slide) is indicated above the first measure of the final D section. The second system (measures 37-39) starts with a 'D' section (notes 17, 16, 14, 0, 0, 0) and ends with a 'Sl' section (notes 0, 0, 0, 7). A double bar line with repeat dots is between measures 38 and 39. The third system (measures 40-41) shows a 'D' section with notes 0, 0, 0. A circled cross symbol is located below measure 39.

This is a tune from western Pennsylvania fiddler Sarah Armstrong, as transcribed by musicologist Samuel Bayard in his Hill Country Tunes collection, published in 1944. I first heard this tune a few years ago when Linda Henry and Jerry Dallal played it at the weekly Sunday night old time music jam at the Skellig, in Waltham, Massachusetts. Bayard states that "a notable feature of this dance air is its short three-note prelude, which is never played except at the very start, and is left out of all subsequent repetitions."

If you are wondering about the odd title, apparently infestation of living sheep by blowfly (*Lucilia cuprina*) maggots is a common agricultural problem. The disease is called fly strike, and if not immediately treated can cause the animal an agonizing death. Doesn't seem to fit with the happy tune, but go figure.