

Rosewood Casket

Traditional

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The musical score is written for guitar in 2/4 time. It consists of eight staves of music, each with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 2/4. The chords used are D, A7, and G. The notation includes various fretted notes, slurs, and fingerings. A double bar line with repeat dots is present at the beginning of the second staff. A first ending bracket labeled '1.' spans measures 17-18, with the instruction 'Up the neck break' written below it. The score ends with a final measure on the eighth staff.

Staff 1: Chords D, A7. Notes: 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0.

Staff 2: Chords D, A7. Notes: 0, 2, 0, 1, 0, 0, 2, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0.

Staff 3: Chords D, G. Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 2, 0, 0, 2, 0, 1.

Staff 4: Chords A7, A7. Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 2, 0, 2, 0, 0, 1, 0, 2.

Staff 5: Chords D, A7. Notes: 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 12, 13, 12, 13, 13, 0, 10, 0.

Staff 6: Chords D, A7. Notes: 0, 0, 10, 12, 10, 11, 0, 0, 12, 13, 12, 13, 13, 0, 10, 0.

Staff 7: Chords D, G. Notes: 0, 0, 2, 0, 0, 0, 12, 13, 12, 13, 9, 10, 10, 9, 10.

29

D A7

33

D

2.

B

A friend of mine recently lent me a book about old time musicians in the border counties of western Virginia and western North Carolina. While reading the book, I came across the name of a tune, Rosewood Casket, or Little Rosewood Casket, that I remembered playing often years ago. I don't remember where I learned it. I went through my old tab binders, and searched the hard drives on my desktop computer, but couldn't find a tablature for it. What I did find was a recording I made with my friends Brian Clancey on guitar and Tom Speth on bass, done around 1998. So I did something I haven't done in years, I slowed my own recording down to 1/3 speed, in order to figure out how I played it. It's in open D tuning (aDF#AD). I sing it on the recording; here are the lyrics.

In a little rosewood casket,
Resting on a marble stand,
Is a packet of old letters,
Written by my true love's hand.

Will you go and get them, sister?
Will you read them all to me?
I have often tried to read them,
But for tears, I could not see.

Tell her that I never blamed her,
Though to me, she proved untrue.
Tell her that I'll ne'er forget her,
Till I bid this world adieu.

Please tell her I still love her,
Not an unkind word was spoke.
Tell, oh, tell her, sister, tell her,
That my heart, in sadness, broke.

While I listen to you read them,
I will gently fall asleep.
Fall asleep to wake in Jesus,
Oh dear sister, do not weep.

In a little rosewood casket,
Resting on a marble stand,
Is a packet of old letters,
Written by my true love's hand.