

MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

This rocking folk song probably originated on a Texas prison farm. The train that inspired it may have been the Golden Gate Limited, which pulled out of Houston at midnight headed for San Francisco. Less than an hour later its "ever-lovin'" headlight shone through the prison bars, stirring fantasies of freedom. The great folksinger, Huddie Ledbetter, better known as Leadbelly, knew that particular prison all too well. In his youth he was a rambler and a "rounder." He knew the rural South, from its churches to its chain gangs. He remembered hundreds of songs heard from anonymous singers—which he reshaped with his powerful voice and his hard-driving 12-string guitar. "Midnight Special" was just one of the many songs he brought to light. It was the title of a recently published biography of Leadbelly, *The Midnight Special*, by Edmund Addeo and Richard Carvin.

Traditional

Repeat this bar at least four times. Start very slowly and gradually pick up speed.

Repeat at least four times continuing to pick up speed.

Very slowly

Moderate boogie-rock tempo

Now you wake up in the

C9




G

morn - ing, You hear the ding - dong ring, ___

D7

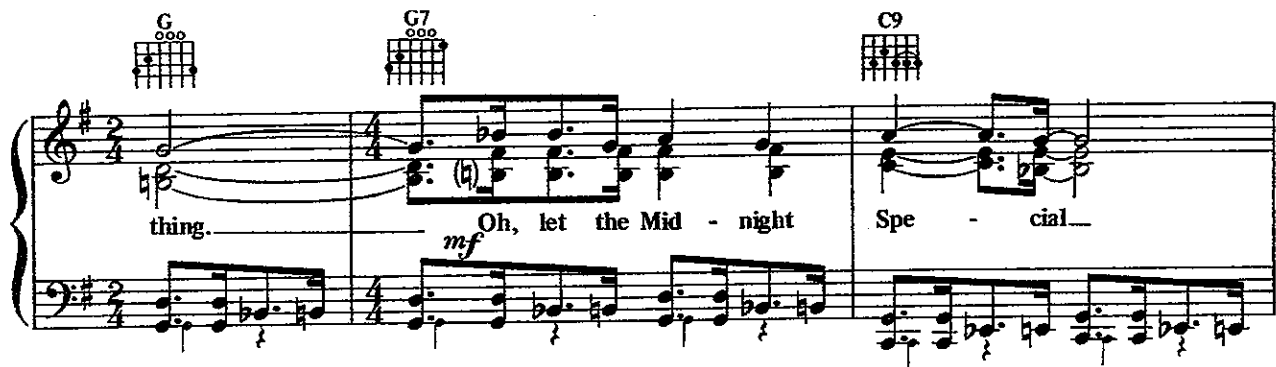
C9


You go march-ing to the ta - ble, You see the same darn

G  G7  C9 

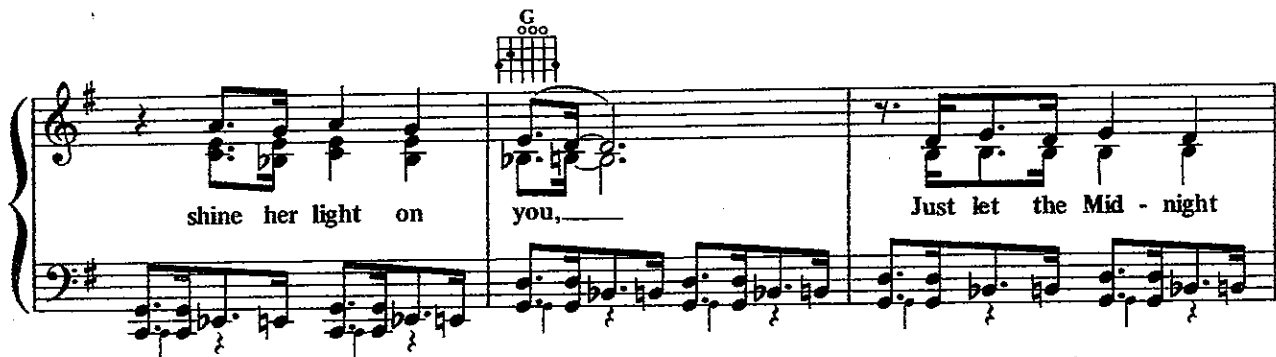
thing. Oh, let the Mid - night Spe - cial_

mf



G 

shine her light on you, Just let the Mid - night






D7  C9  A7  D7  G 

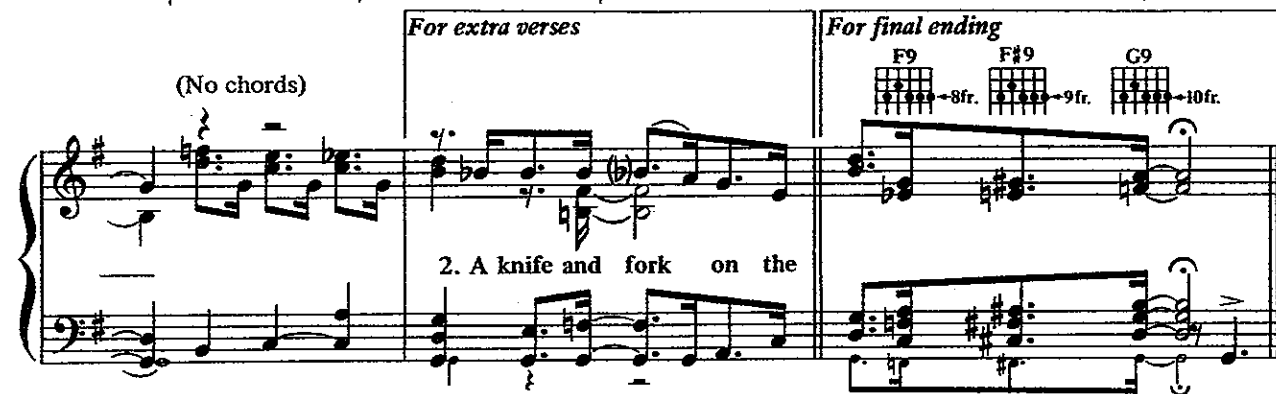
Spe - cial_ shine her ev - er - lov - in' light on you.



(No chords) For extra verses For final ending

F9  -8fr. F#9  -9fr. C9  -10fr.

2. A knife and fork on the



2. A knife and a fork on the table,
And nothin' in your pan;
But just say a word about it,
And you're in trouble with that man.
Chorus

3. Yonder Miss Rosie's a-comin'.
You're askin' me how do I know?
I know her by her apron,
And by the dress she wore.
Chorus

4. She's bringin' me some coffee,
She's bringin' me some tea.
Man, she's bringin' just about ev'rything
But not the jailhouse key!
Chorus