

# A Better Place To Be

Harry Chapin

It was an early morning bar room  
And the place just opened up  
And the little man come in so fast and it  
Started at his cups

And the broad who served the whiskey  
She was a big old friendly girl  
And tried to fight her empty nights  
By smilin' at the world

And she said "Hey Bub, It's been awhile  
Since you been around  
Where the hell you been hidin'?  
And why you look so down ?

The little man just sat there like he'd never heard a sound  
The waitress she gave out with a cough  
Acting not the least put off  
She spoke once again

She said, "I don't want to bother you  
Consider it's understood  
I know I'm not no beauty queen  
But I sure can listen good"

And the little man took his drink in his hand  
And he raised it to his lips  
He took a couple of sips  
And he told that waitress this story

I am the midnight watchman down at Miller's Tool and Die  
And I watch the metal rusting, I watch the time go by  
A week ago at the Diner, I stopped to get a bite  
And this here lovely lady she sat two seats from my right  
And Lord, Lord, Lord  
She was alright

You see, she was so damned beautiful she could warm a winter's frost  
But she looked long past lonely, and well nigh kinda lost  
Now I'm not much of a mover or a pick-em-up easy guy  
But I decided to glide on over and give her one good try  
And Lord, Lord, Lord  
She was worth a try

And I was tongued-tied like a school boy  
I stammered out some words  
It did not seem to matter much 'cause I don't think she heard  
She just looked clear on through me to a space back in my head  
And it shamed me into silence, as quietly she said

'If you want me to come with you that's all right with me  
'Cause I know I'm going nowhere and anywhere's a better place to be  
Anywhere's a better place to be'

When I drove her to my boarding house and I took her up to my room  
And I went to turn on the only light to brighten up the gloom  
But she said, "Please leave the light off, oh, I don't mind the dark"

And as her clothes all tumbled 'round her, I could hear my heart

The moonlight shown upon her as she lay back in my bed  
It was the kind of scene I only had imagined in my head  
I just could not believe it, to think that she was real  
And as I tried to tell her she said, "I know just how you feel

And if you want to come here with me that's all right with me  
'Cause I've been oh so lonely, lovin' someone is a better way to be  
Anywhere's a better way to be"

When the morning came so swiftly I held her in my arms  
She slept like a baby, snug and safe from harm  
I did not want to share her or dare to break the mood  
So before she woke I went out to buy us both some food  
I came back with my paper bag to find that she was gone  
She'd left a six word letter saying, 'It's time that I moved on'

You know the waitress took her bar rag  
And she wiped it across her eyes  
And as she spoke her voice came out as something like a sigh  
She said, "I wish that I was beautiful or that you were halfway blind  
And I wish I weren't so goddamned fat, I wish that you were mine  
And I wish that you'd come with me when I leave for home  
For we both know all about emptiness and livin' all alone"

And the little man  
Looked at the empty glass in his hand  
And he smiled a crooked grin  
He said, "I guess I'm out of gin  
And I know we both have been so lonely

And if you want me to come with you that's all right with me  
'Cause I know I'm goin' nowhere and anywhere's a better place to be'"