

Story of a Life

Harry Chapin

I can see myself it's a golden sunrise
Young boy open up your eyes
It's supposed to be your day.
Now off you go horizon bound
And you won't stop until you've found
Your own kind of way.
And the wind will whip your tousled hair,
The sun, the rain, the sweet despair,
Great tales of love and strife.
And somewhere on your path to glory
You will write your story of a life.

And all the towns that you walk through
And all the people that you talk to
Sing you their songs.
And there are times you change your stride,
There are times you can't decide
Still you go on.
And then the young girls dance their gypsy tunes
And share the secrets of the moon
So soon you find a wife.
And though she sees your dreams go poorly
Still she joins your story of a life.

So you settle down and the children come
And you find a place that you come from.
Your wandering is done.
And all your dreams of open spaces
You find in your children's faces
One by one.
And all the trips you know you missed
And all the lips you never kissed
Cut through you like a knife.
And now you see stretched out before thee
Just another story of a life.

So what do you do now?
When she looks at you now?
You know those same old jokes all the jesters tell
You tell them to her now.
And all the same old songs all the minstrels sang
You sing 'em to her now.
But it don't matter anyhow
'Cause she knows by now.

So every chance you take don't mean a thing.
What variations can you bring
To this shopworn melody.
And every year goes by like a tollin' bell.
It's battered merchandise you sell.
Not well, she can see.
And though she's heard it all a thousand times
Couched in your attempted rhymes
She'll march to your drum and fife.
But the question echoes up before me
Where's the magic story of a life?

Now sometimes words can serve me well
Sometimes words can go to hell
For all that they do.
And for every dream that took me high
There's been a dream that's passed me by.
I know it's so true
And I can see it clear out to the end
And I'll whisper to her now again
Because she shared my life.
For more than all the ghosts of glory
She makes up the story,
She's the only story
Of my life.