

Gentle on My Mind

Nat Stuckey

It's knowing that your door is always open and your path is free to walk
That makes me tend to leave my sleeping bag rolled up
And stashed behind your couch
And it's knowing I'm not shackled by forgotten words and bonds
And the ink stains that have dried upon some line
That keeps you on the back roads by the rivers of my memory
Keeps you ever gentle on my mind
It's not clinging to the rocks and I'd be planted on their columns now that binds me
Or because that somebody said because they thought we fit together walking
And it's knowin' that the world will not be cursing or forgiving
When I walk along some railroad track and find
That you're movin' on the back roads by the rivers of my memory
And for hours you're just gentle on my mind
Though the wheat fields and the clothes lines
And the junk yards and the highways come between us
And some other woman's cryin' to her mother cause she turned and I was gone
I still might run in silence tears of joy might stain my face
And a summer sun might burn me till I'm blind
But not to where I cannot see you walkin' on the back roads
By the rivers flowing gentle on my mind
I dipped my cup of soap back from a gurgling crackling caltron
in some train yard
My beard a roughen coal pile and a dirty hat pulled low across my face
Through cupped hands round a tin can I pretend to hold you to my breast and find
That you're waving from the back roads by the rivers of my memory
Ever smiling ever gentle on my mind