

Harry Chapin

"Better Place To Be"

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It was an early morning bar room
And the place just opened up
And a little man come in so fast and started at his cuffs
Now the broad who served the whiskey
She was a big ol' friendly girl
And she tried to fight her empty nights by smiling at
the world
And she said, "Hey, bub, it's been awhile"
"Since you've been around"
"Where the hell you been hidin'? And why ya look so
down?"
But the little man just sat there like he'd never heard a
sound
The waitress, she give out a cough
And acting not the least put off she spoke once again
She said, "I don't wanna 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 hands
And he raised it to his lips
He took a couple of sips
And he told the waitress this story
"I am the midnight watchman down at Miller's Tool and
Die
And I watch the metal rusting
And 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
She was so damn beautiful she could warm a winter
frost
But she was long past lonely, and well nigh' onto 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
Tongue-tied like a schoolboy I stammered out some
words
But it did not really 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, then that's alright
with me
Cause you know I'm going nowhere
And anywhere's a better place to be'
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
For I don't mind the dark
And as her clothes all tumbled 'round her
I could hear my heart'
The moonlight shone upon her as she laid 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
'Shhh....I know just how you feel
And if you want to come here with me
Then that's alright with me
Cause I've been oh, so lonely
Lovin' someone is a better way to be'
Morning came so swiftly, as I held her in my arms
And 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 and bought us both
some food
I come back with my paper bag
To find that she was gone
She'd left a six word letter
Sayin 'It's time that I moved on'.
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 God damn 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 loneliness and livin' all
alone"
And the little man looked at the empty glass
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 then that's alright
with me
'Cause ya know I'm goin' nowhere
And anywhere's a better place to be"

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