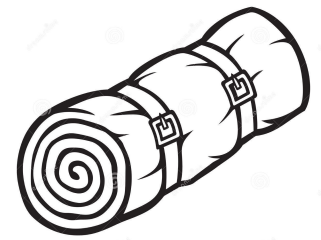


# Gentle On My Mind

John Hartford



C  
It's knowing that your door is always  
Dm  
open and your path is free to walk,  
That makes me tend to leave my sleeping  
G7  
bag rolled up and stashed behind your  
C  
couch.  
And it's knowing I'm not shackled by  
forgotten words and bonds,  
Or the ink stains that have dried upon  
Dm  
some line,  
That keeps you on the back-roads  
G7  
By the rivers of my memory that keeps  
C  
you ever gentle on my mind.

It's not clinging to the rocks and ivy  
Dm  
Planted on some columns now that binds  
me. Or something that somebody said,  
G7  
Because they thought we fit together  
C  
walking.

It's just knowing that the world will not  
be cursing  
Or forgiving if I walk along some  
Dm  
railroad track and find,  
That you're moving on the back-roads by  
the rivers of my memory,  
G7  
And for hours you're just gentle on my  
C  
mind.

Though the wheat fields and the clothes  
lines,  
And the junkyards and the highways  
come between us,  
And some other girl is crying to her  
mother,  
Cause she turned and I was gone.

Still I might walk for hours, tears of joy  
might stain my face,  
And the summer sun might burn me till  
I'm blind.  
But not to where I cannot see you,  
walking on the back-roads,  
By the rivers flowing gentle on my mind.

I dip my cup of soup back from a  
gurgling, crackling caldron in some train  
yard,  
My beard a rufflin' coal pile and  
a dirty hat pulled low across my face.  
Through cupped hands 'round a tin can,  
I pretend I 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.