

## Mercenaries

Harry Chapin

It's a slow motion night  
In the hot city lights  
Past time when the good folks  
Are snoring in bed  
On a loose-jointed cruise  
To recolor your blues  
With illegal notions alive,  
Alive in your head

You are back from some war  
That you've been fighting for  
Some old blue blood bastard  
In a dark pinstripe suit  
and the word from your loins  
Has your mind in your groin  
And your back pocket burning with blood  
Blood money loot

So, you walk past the glow  
Of the flicker-picture shows  
Where the raincoat men wait  
For a child to come by  
And the women in doorways  
Who have nothing to say  
'Cause your money is talking  
To the ones that you would try

She owns the block  
With the dead pawnshop clock  
She's the answer to dreams  
That you pay to come true  
She's got no heart of gold  
But that's not what she's sold  
She just sees herself doing what she  
What she has to do

And she's all that you're hoping  
As her coat falls open  
Give her bread she leads you  
To a bed on the floor  
Where for ten million years  
And through ten billion tears  
The armies of bootmen have marched  
Back from their wars

She's in that state of grace  
Before time finds her face  
With a mind of old wisdoms  
And a body still young  
And she tastes as sweet  
As a child's chocolate treat  
Before the butts and the whiskey  
Had wasted the taste of your tongue

Play the music again  
Of the grey-stubble men  
That groaning blue symphony

Moans evermore  
And you watch as she fakes it  
And of course you just take it  
She's better than others  
You never paid money for

You've used up your booty  
The girl's done her duty  
The turnstile has turned  
And you learn you are done  
You're back on the street  
Joining fresh marching feet  
You see more soldiers coming  
And your girl chooses one

And the medic has brought  
Shots for what you have caught  
Your leave is all over  
You're back on the line  
And you joke in the trenches  
Of the hot blooded wenches  
And the next thing that you'll do  
When they next give you the time

And you're back in your army  
Back shedding red blood  
And you dream of the girl  
As you sleep in the mud  
And you know you'd swap with her  
If the deal could be made  
'Cause you'd rather be working at love  
At Love as your trade