

Sing Me a Song of Freedom

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Poem for a Lush friend who is newly free from a bad relationship.

<http://www.lushstories.com/stories/love-poems/sing-me-a-song-of-freedom.aspx>

Sing Me A Song of Freedom

By Captain Midnight

Adapted from "Piano Man" By Billy Joel

For Hotstuff. I know I had promised a version on "Don't Stop" by Fleetwood Mac, but this poem unfolded in my head.

This is dedicated to Greg.

(Two bars of piano, and a harmonica setup)

(Verse 1)

It's 9:00 o'clock
On a Saturday ...
Through your window
The sunlight streams in ...

And you wake up owning all of
The king-sized bed
That for so long
You had shared with him.

For a while you hug close
To a pillow ...
Thinking about
Those glorious days ...

When your eyes, hearts and bodies
Merged with passion ...
Making love
In infinite ways.

(4 bars of harmonica music)

You arise and make hospital corners
On the bed, like the nurse
You have been ...

And your mind ranges back
Twenty years and more
To the first
Of your man
Among men.

(Harmonica solo, 8 bars)

(Chorus 1)

Sing us a song of
Freedom,
Sing us a song
From your heart,
Sing to us for who freedom
Is a concept abstract
On our part.

(Piano transition to next verse)

(Verse 2)

As you take a shower and
Dress up,
You think of your
First wedding jewels,

You were young when you married,

Barely out of your teens,
Still firmly under
Your parents' rules.

At twenty-two you were
A mother,
Of a girl and a boy
With many needs,

And already you'd forgiven
Their father
When you caught him
"Sowing his seeds."

Since he's always been
Faithful
In many ways ...
To his God,
To his work,
To his home ...

You and he
Love each other
As much as you can,
Even outside
The pleasure dome.

As you try on your new
Pants outfit,
With two stylish
But good
Walking shoes,

Your mind flits back
To that Easter
When your best was
A set
Of scrub blues.

(Chorus 2)

Sing us a song
Of Freedom ...
Tell us
How you took
Those first steps ...
For there are those of us
Who are afraid to be free
Out of envy and fear
We have wept.

(Piano transition to next verse)

(Verse 3)

It was a pretty good crowd
For Easter Sunday,
The charge nurse
Gave you a smile,

And talked about a
Newfangled computer app
Where you could
Share someone's life
For a while.

The nursing floor
Became a wild carnival,
Of people gone stupid
From beer,

You fled down
Ten flights
To a smoke-filled lounge,
Thinking
"Man,
What am I doing here?"

As you stuck it out
With your avatar,
A new man slowly
Emerged,

He was looking for you,
You were looking for him,
Your desires
To meet
Each other surged.

(Transitional harmonica and piano)

And at nine
O'clock
On a Saturday,
Your car door opened and
You hopped in,

As you shared
A last drive
With your husband,

Whom for ten years
You'd been true
Through thick and thin.

The question haunted you
On that last drive,
Toward your first trip to
Far, far away ...

"I am following my heart
Toward a man I just love
But God,
Will You
Forgive me
This day?"

Thirty hours on the train
To New Orleans,
The first time
You've been out
On your own ...
Is it your first step
Into freedom
Or will you be stranded
Alone?

The train stops in the middle
Of nowhere,
Then he comes up
And hugs you
Like a bear,

And you drive
To his glittering
Hotel room

And you know
You have arrived
"There."

When he plunges his shaft
Into your core,
And your arms, legs and heart
Round him hold,

You have no idea
He's living in a cage,
Because it feels like
It's made of solid gold.

In the present, you drive
To a cemetery...
On the anniversary
Of the day
That you heard

Gunshots ring out
And you fell to the ground
Still clasping
The wing
Of your dead bird.

They spirited you off
To a safe house,
They said, "Lady,
What are you
Doing here?"

They bought you a car
And said "Drive away far
"Because this place
Is filled
With fear."

Now in the cemetery
You kneel carefully
By the headstone
Of the man
You loved first ...

You say, "You gave me love,
Friends and blessing
To go away
And do my worst."

You dared not crawl
Back to him,
Your sin, you felt,
Was too great,

You did not know
'Til much later
He stood up for
You against hate.

(Chorus 3)

Sing us a song
Of freedom,

Sing us a song
Tonight ...

For God's grace
Illuminated your path ...

As you sought out
Your place
In the light.

(Transition to Verse 4)

(Verse 4)

The trip ended up
In Glitter Gulch,
At a flophouse for
Broken dreams,

As you sat at a bar
Like a derelict,
A man saw
You were "Not what she seems."

This man had a reputation
As long as your arm
His ex-wives numbered
Four or five ...

But his rap was also
For kindness,
And helping people
To feel alive.

Gentle words and manners
Were his instruments
And a genuine caring
Concern ...

He stepped down
From his post,
Became your personal host,
And to him you would
Slowly turn.

In New Orleans you had
Conceived two babies,
The father simply listed as
"Unknown."

And when the new man found out
He said without doubt,
"I'll help raise them
As if they're my own."

(Chorus)

Sing us a song
Of Freedom,
You passed
Through another
Stage ...

Though you're still bound
To your husband and
Children,

It's a spacious, glittering
Cage.

(Transition music to Verse 5)

(Verse 5)

In the cemetery
With tracing paper
On the headstones,
You image
Your husband
And your son,

Before they went
To Heaven untimely
They forgave you
As the prodigal one.

Of Greg, his memorial
You cannot find
In a drawer-like
New Orleans tomb,

But Zach and Hannah,
Whom he never knew,
Are the fruits
Of his seed
And your womb.

Saks Fifth Avenue
On a Saturday,
Purposefully you
Bustle in,

After having four babies
You want to be
A classic lady

From your toes
To your eyes
And your chin.

The cage open and

The bird flown,
Your third mate
Has himself
A new doll ...

But though he may be an ass
He's still kind to you, lass
Gives all you need
To break out
Of your shell.

(Chorus)

Sing us a song
Of freedom,
To those of us who
Still feel
Made of stone,
Even if we share a drink
Of your kindness,
It's better
Than drinking nothing
Alone.

(Transition to Verse 6)

(Verse 6)

Now you visit your brother
And his family
To plan out
Your life
For a while,

You'll share the twins
Among relatives and step dad,
Since each
Makes the others
Smile.

You'll always put family
Above all else,
As daughter, sister, mother and wife ...

But now you are free
To choose your own path,
For the first time
In your still-young life.

Where your path takes you next,
Only you can know,
Freedom is
A breathtaking thing ...

But here's hoping
It's a path
Toward happiness,

Like you felt
When you first donned
The wedding ring.

(Chorus)

Sing us a song
Of freedom,
Sing us a song
Of flight ...
For we're all in the mood
For our close friend
To share
What she sees
In the light.

(Winding-down music.)

(CODA)

(Spoken, taken from a real Billy Joel performance after lots of champagne)

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Lots of sex

Lots of love,

Lots of happiness.

Don't take any SHIT from anybody!

(Cheering as the CD track runs out)