

Bluesman

Harry Chapin

The kid heard the word up in Brooklyn
It was his second year of medical school
He went and stashed some jeans into his guitar case
His father said, "You're a fool"
But the boy jumped on board a Greyhound bus
It took him two days to get to Mobile
And though it took two weeks to track the old man down
He never doubted that the rumor was real

But there the old man stood by the store front
With his white cane hanging from his belt
And he was bending the steel of his guitar strings
So it seemed like the metal had to melt
He was the last of the street corner singers
Paying his final years of dues
The voice in his throat was like a bullfrog croak
Yes it's he who invented the blues

"To play the blues, boy, you got to live 'em
Got your dues, boy, you know you got to give 'em
Got to start sweet like a slow blues rhythm
Like a heartbeat you'll always be with 'em
When you're married to the blues, boy
Your guitar is your wife
It's like that fine old woman
Who you're faithful to for life."

Well the kid walked up as the blind man finished
And was bent to put his guitar away
The old man heard him and said, "Who are you?"
"I'm the kid you're gonna teach to play."
The old man laughed but the kid kept talking 'bout
How he'd help him get around
That's when the old man said
"I don't need no fool to get me where in the hell I'm bound"

The kid nods his head with a great big grin and says
"When do we begin?"
That's when the old man said
"If You're staying with me
This is how it's got to be "

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