

Harry Chapin, I Miss America

I Miss America

by Harry Chapin

By the time I was thirteen

I started taking shape.

At eighteen I was so beautiful

That the strangers started to gape.

They said "Enter the ultimate contest

If you're as gorgeous as you seem."

They said "Please, please, please

Be our American dream."

But late that night beneath the grieving moon

There's a dazzling sight in my motel room

For a grunting judge with his bulging eyes

I give my all for his cherished prize.

Oh why, oh why?

I'm Miss America

Crying on TV

Silver clad in satin rags,

But everything's where it should be

Oh say can you see, ah say can you see.

After they showed me the game ball

They told me put on weight.

They told me I'd be powerful

They told me I'd be great.

And my Uncle Sam he would coach me

His helmet on my head

And they said "Please, please please, please

Please win and beat the spread."

But the new game plan that the owners had made

Meant that win or lose there would be a trade.

For the team's become a real gold mine

And the kid's sold off for the bottom line.

Oh why, oh why?

Mr. America

Sweating on TV

The winner's joy from the battered boy

For everything's where it should be

Oh say can you see, ah say can you see.

At last we've come together

Call it marriage or civil war.

If it brings us to battle, babe

It must be worth our fighting for.

Though today came up cloudy

There will be other days.

"Ah, please, please, please, please

What else is there to say?"

But in plywood spread

By a plastic stream

And in separate beds with a borrowed dream

And with questions wide and the silence deep

We take two pills so at last we'll sleep.

Oh why, oh why?

Mr. and Mrs. America

Our story's on TV

Can you hear canned laughter

For everything's where it should be

Oh say can you see, ah say can you see.

Well, my little boy he told me something

Just the other night.

He whispered it as I kissed him

Before I turned out the light.

And of course he said it simple

As only children can

He said "Daddy, daddy, daddy, please

I'm ready to dream again."