

Bette Midler, Millworker

Now my grandfather was a sailor.
He blew in off the water.
My father was a farmer
and I his only daughter.
Took up with a no good
millworking man from Massachusetts
who died from too much whiskey
and leaves me these three faces to feed.
Millwork ain't easy, millwork ain't hard.
Millwork, it ain't nothin'
but an awful, boring job.
I'm waiting for a daydream
to take me through the mornin';
Put me in my coffee break
where I can have a sandwich and remember.
And it's me and my machine
for the rest of the mornin',
for the rest of the afternoon,
for the rest of my life.
Now my mind begins to wander
to the days back on the farm.
I can see my father smilin'
and me swingin' on his arm.
I can hear my granddad's stories
of the storms out on Lake Erie,
where vessels and cargos
and fortunes and sailor's lives were lost.
Yeah, but it's my life that's been wasted.
And I have been the fool
to let this manufacture
use my body for a tool.
As I ride home in the evenin'
I'm staring at my hands,
swearin' by my sorrow
that a young girl ought to stand a better chance.
Oh, but may I work the mills
just as long as I'm able,
and never meet the man
who's name is on the label.
Whoa, it's me and my machine
for the rest of the mornin',
for the rest of the afternoon,
for the rest of my life . . . wasted.