

Gentle On My Mind (John Hartford)

1 (It's) knowin' that your door is always open and your path is free to walk
 That makes me tend to leave my sleeping bag rolled up and stashed behind your
 couch. And it's knowing I'm not shackled by forgotten words and bonds, and
 the ink stains that are dried upon some line, That keeps you in the backroads
 by the rivers of my memory, that keeps you ever gentle on my mind.

2 It's not clinging to the rocks and ivy planted on their columns now that binds me,
 Or something that somebody said because they thought we fit together walkin'.
 It's just knowing that the world will not be cursin' or forgivin' when I walk along
 some railroad track and find that you're moving on the backroads by the
 rivers of my memory and for hours you're just gentle on my mind.

4 I dip my cup of soup back from the gurglin' cracklin' caldron in some train yard;
 My beard a roughenin' coalpile, and a dirty hat pulled low across my face.
 Through cupped hands 'round the tin can I pretend to hold you to my breast and
 find that you're wavin' from the backroads by the rivers of my memory,
 ever smilin', ever gentle on my mind.

Chord diagrams for C, Cmaj7, C6, Dm, F+, F, and G7. The strumming pattern is 4/4 SP2, with a sequence of strums: 1 (down), 2 (down), and 3 (up), 4 (down) and (up).

Originally written and recorded by John Hartford (right) in 1967, Gentle On My Mind became big hits for both Glen Campbell (in 1967) and Dean Martin (in 1968). It was also recorded by Frank Sinatra (1968), Elvis Presley (1969), Aretha Franklin (1969) and Alison Krauss (2017).

