

City of New Orleans

By: Steve Goodman

Riding on the City of New Orleans,
Illinois Central Monday morning rail
Fifteen cars and fifteen restless riders,
Three conductors and twenty-five sacks of mail.
All along the southbound odyssey
The train pulls out at Kankakee
Rolls along past houses, farms and fields.
Passin' trains that have no names,
Freight yards full of old black men
And the graveyards of the rusted automobiles.

Good morning America how are you?
Don't you know me I'm your native son,
I'm the train they call The City of New Orleans,
I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done.

Dealin' cards with the old men in the club car.
Penny a point ain't no one keepin' score.
Won't you pass the paper bag that holds the bottle
Feel the wheels rumblin' 'neath the floor.
And the sons of Pullman porters and the sons of engineers
Ride their father's magic carpets made of steam.
Mothers with their babes asleep,
Are rockin' to the gentle beat
And the rhythm of the rails is all they dream.

Good Morning America how are you? ...

Nighttime on The City of New Orleans,
Changing cars in Memphis, Tennessee.
Half way home, we'll be there by morning
Through the Mississippi darkness rolling down to the sea.
And all the towns and people seem
To fade into a bad dream
And the steel rails still ain't heard the news.
The conductor sings his song again,

The passengers will please refrain
This train's got the disappearing railroad blues.

Good night, America, how are you?
Don't you know me I'm your native son,
I'm the train they call The City of New Orleans,
I'll be gone five hundred miles when the day is done.