

## **Emmylou Harris**

# **"Broken Man's Lament"**

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I was once a broken man  
I was once a broken fool  
Lost my wife and children  
To one basic broken rule

Now I live my life in silence  
Though I'm not quite in a shell  
I drink and listen to that song  
'A Whiter Shade of Pale', oh  
A Whiter Shade of Pale

I was a good shade tree mechanic  
So I sent myself to school  
They smoothed out my rough edges  
In my hands they put new tools

The instructor, once he told me  
I could work on any line  
I could tune to make a diesel sing  
Just like Patsy Cline, oh  
Just like Patsy Cline

Well, I met my wife to be  
Through my mother's best friend's son  
She'd been a barroom singer  
She was as good as anyone

But I asked her to stop singing  
And the girl, she did not flinch  
Next day she went and bought that man  
A brand new crescent wrench, oh  
A brand new crescent wrench

We had three fine children  
As eight years went on by  
And earned a supervising line  
My knuckles stayed bone dry

But after supper I kept hearing her  
By the kitchen radio

Singing sweet but desperate harmony

A little bit too low, oh  
A little bit too low

She left three months later  
I'd just come home for lunch  
Note said "Easy come, hard go  
I still love you so much"

She said, "I don't know if I'll be there  
Or if you'll want me when I come  
But if and when that happens, dear  
You'd better let my sweet dream run", oh  
Let my sweet dream run

Oh, oh  
Oh, oh  
Oh, oh

I was a good shade tree mechanic  
So I sent myself to school  
They smoothed out my rough edges  
In my hand they put new tools

The instructor once he told me  
I could work on any line  
But now my diesels ain't the only thing  
That sing like Patsy Cline, oh  
Sing like Patsy Cline

I was once a broken man  
I was once a broken fool  
Lost my wife and children  
To one basic broken rule

Now I live my life in silence  
Though I'm not quite in a shell  
I drink and listen to that song  
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