

Emmylou Harris, Spanish Johnny

(Paul Siebel)

Those other years, the dusty years
We drove the big hers through
I tried to forget the miles we rode
And Spanish Johnny too
He'd sit beside a water ditch when all this herd was in
And he'd never harm a child but sing to his mandolin

The old talk, the old ways, and the dealin' of our game
But Spanish Johnny never spoke, but sing a song of Spain
And his talk with men was vicious talk
When he was drunk on gin
Ah, but those were golden things he said to his mandolin

We had to stand, we tried to judge, we had to stop him then
For the hand so gentle to a child had killed so many men
He died a hard death long ago before the road come in
And the night before he swung he sung to his mandolin

Well, we carried him out in the mornin' sun
A man that done no good
And we lowered him down in the cold clay
Stuck in a cross of wood
And a letter we wrote to his kinfolk
To tell them where he'd been
And we shipped it out to Mexico, along with his mandolin