

James Taylor, 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 dies from too much whiskey and leaves me these three faces to feed.

Millwork ain't easy, millwork ain't hard, millwork it ain't nothing but an awful boring job.
I'm waiting for a daydream to take me through the morning
and put me in my coffee break where I can have a sandwich and remember.

Then it's me and my machine for the rest of the morning,
for the rest of the afternoon and the rest of my life.

Now my mind begins to wander to the days back on the farm.
I can see my father smiling at me, swinging on his arm.
I can hear my granddad's stories of the storms out on Lake Erie
where vessels and cargoes and fortunes and sailors' lives were lost.

Yes, but it's my life has been wasted, and I have been the fool
to let this manufacturer use my body for a tool.
I can ride home in the evening, staring at my hands,
swearing by my sorrow that a young girl ought to stand a better chance.

So may I work the mills just as long as I am able
and never meet the man whose name is on the label.

It be me and my machine for the rest of the morning
and the rest of the afternoon, gone for the rest of my life.