The True and Trembling Brakeman

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See that true and trembling brakeman
As he falls between those cars,
Not one moment's warning had he
From those breake cars he was hurt.

See those car wheels passing o'er him
O'er his mangled body and head,
See his sister bending o'er him
Crying, "Brother, are you dead?"

"Dying, sister, yes I'm dying
Going to join that better shore
Oh my father and my mother
I shall never see no more."

See that brave young engineerman
At the age of twenty one,
Stepping from his engine, crying,
"Now what have I done!

Have I killed that faithful brakeman?
Can it be that he is dyin'?
Oh, I did my best to save him
But I could not stop in time."

"Dying, buddy, yes I'm dying
Going to join that better shore
Oh my buddies on the C.C.
I shall never see no more.

Sister, when you see my brother
These few words I'll send to him,
Never, never venture braking
If he does his life will end."

THese few words that he has spoken
Clasp his hands across his breast
For the spirit all had left him
And his soul had gone to rest.

From Ozark Folksongs, Randolph

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