

# Cottonwood Tree

Marty Robbins

I rode into Tucson three hours ago  
For supplies and a short, friendly game  
A poker-wild Smitty put some new shoes  
On old Dan before he goes lame I sat in a game at The Miner's Saloon  
Soon I had doubled my stake  
The cards run like they'd been dealt by lady luck  
They were just sealin' my fate A young cowboy lost more than he could afford  
And accused me of dealin' too smart  
His draw was too slow and he fell to the floor  
With three bullets close to the heart Oh, cottonwood tree are you waiting for me  
Waiting to take me away  
I've done no wrong, but the town cannot see  
And, so, with my life I must pay A crowd started gathrin', the Sheriff came in  
I handed him over my gun  
Was then that I found out the boy I had killed  
Was the town's biggest man's only son I tried to explain I had shot in defense  
It was the young cowboy or me  
The crowd wouldn't listen, so they drug me out  
To the limb of this cottonwood tree Majestic'ly standing out here all alone  
It's Spring and the valley is green  
But I can't admire a place I don't belong  
To me it's all like a bad dream But old Dan's beneath me with new shoes and all  
As they place the noose 'round my neck  
Cowboys I never laid eyes on before  
A-tyin' my hands to my back Oh, cottonwood tree are you waiting for me  
Waiting to take me away  
I've done no wrong but the town cannot see  
And, so, with my life I must pay I see hate in the eyes of the town's biggest man  
As he pulls a branch from the tree  
To whip the backside of my old pony, Dan  
So, he'll run out from under me Insane, he won't listen to my last appeal  
A wild grin has covered his face  
As I tried to reason just how he would feel  
If he were up here in my place There's many a mountain trail I'll never ride  
Green valley's I'll never see  
A young cowboy died, and a man's foolish pride  
Brought me to this cottonwood tree My face is turned upward and I cannot breath  
The sky's growing dark overhead  
The knot's pulling tight as my body swings free

A few moments more, I'll be dead  
Oh, cottonwood tree were you put here for me  
Put here to take me away  
I've done no wrong, but the town cannot see  
And, so, with my life I must pay

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