

# The Pretender

**Jackson Browne**

I'm going to rent myself a house  
In the shade of the freeway  
I'm going to pack my lunch in the morning  
And go to work each day  
And when the evening rolls around  
I'll go on home and lay my body down  
And when the morning light comes streaming in  
I'll get up and do it again  
Amen  
Say it again  
Amen

I want to know what became of the changes  
We waited for love to bring  
Were they only the fitful dreams  
Of some greater awakening  
I've been aware of the time going by  
They say in the end it's the wink of an eye  
And when the morning light comes streaming in  
You'll get up and do it again  
Amen

Caught between the longing for love  
And the struggle for the legal tender  
Where the sirens sing and the church bells ring  
And the junk man pounds his fender  
Where the veterans dream of the fight  
Fast asleep at the traffic light  
And the children solemnly wait  
For the ice cream vendor  
Out into the cool of the evening  
Strolls the Pretender  
He knows that all his hopes and dreams  
Begin and end there

Ah the laughter of the lovers  
As they run through the night  
Leaving nothing for the others  
But to choose off and fight  
And tear at the world with all their might  
While the ships bearing their dreams  
Sail out of sight

I'm going to find myself a girl  
Who can show me what laughter means  
And we'll fill in the missing colors  
In each other's paint-by-number dreams  
And then we'll put out dark glasses on  
And we'll make love until our strength is gone  
And when the morning light comes streaming in  
We'll get up and do it again  
Get it up again

I'm going to be a happy idiot  
And struggle for the legal tender  
Where the ads take aim and lay their claim  
To the heart and the soul of the spender

And believe in whatever may lie  
In those things that money can buy  
Thought true love could have been a contender  
Are you there?  
Say a prayer for the Pretender  
Who started out so young and strong  
Only to surrender