

A Song in My Heart

I reach out through the wire and I hear it as you speak
I see it in your weary eyes, another lonely week
And even though it's all we've got, I'll smile at you again
Every moment on the screen slips by like this soft rain

But I can see your sparkle there and you've still got some fight
And as I read my grievances, you say I'll be all right
You know that reassures me, so today I'm gonna start

With a song in my head and a song in my heart
With a song in my head and a song in my heart
How can we make music when we're so far apart?
I've got a song in my head and a song in my heart

Why am I complaining now? I'm fed and clean and warm
But I can't stop this hunger for the warmth within your arms
I don't know when I'll be back, it might not be this year
So sing along with me today and brush away those tears

Yeah, I can see your sparkle there and you've still got some fight
And as I read my grievances, you say I'll be all right
You know that reassures me, so today I'm gonna start

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The Fish Always Rots From the Head

It's another day with the fishing rod, another day on the dock so hot
But the water's running cold
The have been fished up here, the smart ones long ago disappeared
None of these straits are paved with gold
My grandpa he's a working man, he still provides whenever he can
But today he just explodes

It's the same old story we've all been told
The rich get richer and we just get old
It's the same old lesson we've never learned
Don't play with fire and you won't get burned
But we'll outlast them in this fight
For they can't stand too long out in the light

Because the fish always rots from the head
Yeah, the fish always rots from the head
And when the head smells as bad as that one does
you can tell that fish is dead
Yeah the fish always rots from the head

Second shift on the assembly line, they work you hard but that's just fine
There's no time left to care
You've got no union and no voice here, they laid three hundred off last year
They say you're lucky to be working there

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Yeah, the fish always rots from the head

All Used Up

(By U. Utah Phillips)

I spent my whole life making somebody rich
I busted my ass for that son of a bitch
And he left me to die like a dog in a ditch and told me I'm all used up

He used up my labor, he used up my time
He plundered my body and squandered my mind
Then he gave me a pension of handouts and wine and told me I'm all used up

My kids are in hock to a god you call Work
Slaving their lives out for some other jerk
Yeah. my youngest in Frisco just made shipping clerk
And he don't know I'm all used up

Young people reaching for power and gold
Don't have respect for anything old
For pennies they're bought and for promises sold someday they'll all be used up

They use up the oil and they use up the trees
They use up the air and they use up the sea
Well how about you friend, and how about me what's left when we're all used up?

I'll finish my life in this crummy hotel
It's lousy with bugs and my God, what a smell
But my plumbing still works and I'm clear as a bell don't tell me I'm all used up

Outside my window the world passes by
Gives me a handout and spits in my eye
And no one can tell me 'cause no one knows why I'm living but I'm all used up

Sometimes in my dreams I sit by a tree
My life is a book of how things used to be
And kids gather 'round and they listen to me and they don't think I'm all used up

And there's songs and there's laughter and things I can do
And all that I've learned I can give back to you
I'd give my last breath just to make it come true and know I'm not all used up

They use up the oil and they use up the trees
They use up the air and they use up the sea
Well how about you friend and how about me, what's left when we're used up?

My Name is George

My name is George, I'll get that over now
Just so you know, I'm not just being proud
I've had this face, always stood out in a crowd
But now I'm staring at this barren ground

I was given this name— I didn't have no choice
I take the blame— I never had no voice
But I'm not ashamed— and I am not your boy
I am a man, and I'm freedom bound

But that's not the way that you see me now in a land that's still not free
Maybe a hundred years from now we'd be neighbors you and me
Later tonight when the sun goes down and you're sitting comfortably
Don't forget that I had a name
Don't forget I was not afraid

They gather round me 'neath this old oak tree
There's no way out--- well, none that I can see
But there's a better world waiting somewhere for me
Oh yes I am, I'm freedom bound

Don't forget that I had a name
Don't forget I was not afraid

God bless you all, and keep you safe and warm
I swear to you I never done nobody harm
But here we are in 1894
And a colored man can't get a trial

My name is George, let's get this over now
Just so you know, I am not being proud
I've had this skin, always stood out in a crowd
But now I'm staring at this barren ground
I am a man, and I'm freedom bound

The Lynyrd Skynyrd Band

This story starts on a baseball field, 1960s Jacksonville
Bob and Gary in the stands
Ronnie's foul ball hit Bob's head, knocked him out, they thought he was dead
And there they formed a band

Ronnie was sixteen, had a car, already thinking like a star
And man, that boy could sing
There was something stirring in his soul, it was 1960s rock and roll
And he was chasing just one thing

It was the freedom in the music, and in the power of a song
He knew nothing lasts forever, we won't be together long

It was an inauspicious start, the three boys played in Bob's carport
And in the car next day
They chased poor Allen up a tree, he cried "Ronnie, please don't beat on me!"
But they just wanted him to play

With Ed and Leon in the band, and Billy on that baby grand
They were finally on their way
Through years and years of playing bars, just scraping by and living hard
But they learned to make it pay

'Cause there was freedom in the music and the power of a song
They knew nothing lasts forever, and they weren't together long
Jacksonville might have the Jaguars, and Mandarin is grand
But the greatest thing came out of here was the Lynyrd Skynyrd band

It was one big party on the road, fame is such a heavy load
But all of it was real
And over time, the lineup changed, Artimus joined and then Steve Gaines
And The Honkettes sealed the deal

That's the band that I recall, I was fourteen in the concert hall
When they blew The Doobies off the stage
Yeah, they were wild and they were free, they were everything I hoped to be
That's why I'm here at Ronnie's grave

'Cause there was freedom in the music and the power of a song
They knew nothing lasts forever, and they weren't together long
Jacksonville might have the Jaguars, and Mandarin is grand
But the greatest thing came out of here was the Lynyrd Skynyrd band
Yeah, the greatest thing came out of here was the Lynyrd Skynyrd band

The Bottle Wins Each Time

He'd been out the whole night searching
High-beams on and windows down
Cruising Christmas Eve with a sleeping kid strapped in the back seat
Through all the seedy parts of town

Found her huddled in an old car
Back behind the auto shop
Brought her home to warm her up over the holiday
But the shaking wouldn't stop
And though he thinks he sees a glimpse of memory in her eyes
She keeps looking to the door

Her old bag is in the corner
Shoes and jacket on the floor
Even the pure love of a child
Can't contain her anymore

When that leaving look gets in her eyes
You know that she's made up her mind
You'll always lose if you give her the chance to choose
The bottle wins each time
The bottle wins each time

Ain't no point to try and reason
It always ends the same
So he bought a ticket back to 'Frisco
She's going on the midnight train
And even though he sees the ghost of memory in her eyes
She keeps looking to the door

Her old bag is in the corner
Shoes and jacket on the floor
Even the pure love of a child
Can't contain her anymore

When that leaving look gets in her eyes
You know that she's made up her mind
You'll always lose if you give her the chance to choose
The bottle wins each time
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Which Side Are You On?

(By Florence Reese)

(gender neutralization by George Mann)

Come all of you good workers, good news to you I'll tell
Of how the good old union has come in here to dwell

Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?

My daddy was a miner, now he's in the air and sun
But he'll stick with the union 'til every battle's won

Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?

They say in Harlan County, there are no neutrals there
You're either with the union, or a thug for J.H. Blair

Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?

Oh workers can you stand it? Oh, tell me how you can?
Will you be a lousy scab or will you take a stand?

Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?

Don't scab for the bosses, don't listen to their lies
Us poor folk haven't got a chance unless we organize

Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?
Which side are you on? Which side are you on?

Seventy Miles From the Border

(By Jack Mancor)

His uncle had worked there awhile
He said you play your cards right boy, you'll get a job in the mine
Got a foot in the door but he fell down a hole
For gas and an open flame are bound to explode

And he said this Friday he was gonna take us to town
Now he's seventy miles from the border and he's three miles underground

I didn't want him to go, he's my only son
He said "I'll be all right, just gotta make a better life for the younger ones"
Seventy-five dollars a day to go down in that hole
For seventy-five dollars a day, well they've taken his soul

And he said this Friday he was gonna take us to town
Now he's seventy miles from the border and he's three miles underground

And so Maria, I've but a few hours left of oxygen
I wish I'd left you more than this hole I find myself in
Love the children as I always have loved you
And should you do unto others if others don't do unto you

And I said this Friday I was gonna take you to town
Now I'm seventy miles from the border and I'm three miles underground
And he said this Friday he's gonna take us to town
Now he's seventy miles from the border and he's three miles underground

At Beluthahatchee

Some people think that folksingers like me have got it made
We only work two hours a day, and sometimes we get paid
But I do forty thousand miles a year just on the road
And man, it's starting to get old
When my batteries need charging and my head is hanging low
I know just where I've gotta go

To Beluthahatchee, site of Woody's final stand
The place where Stetson Kennedy once helped expose The Klan
A land in perfect harmony with nature so it seems
Beluthahatchee in my dreams

Now Stetson dammed a creek up and he flooded out the plain
Beluthahatchee Lake was born and Stetson chose its name
A land of peace and solitude where Freedom staked a claim
Where discord was forgiven and forgotten all the same
There Woody found the space to write and spread the seeds of man
While Stetson watched and waited for The Klan

At Beluthahatchee, site of Woody's final stand
Where Mother Earth and Stetson worked to sanctify the land
A little piece of Heaven that I've tried so hard to find
Beluthahatchee in my mind

Now many years have passed and those brave men are gone
But fellow women and men like you and me will carry on
And if The Klan rises again, let Stetson be your guide
Just shout "Beluthahatchee!" at them and watch 'em run and hide

For love will always conquer hate, that's what the scriptures say
But if it don't this time, then this is where I'll stay

At Beluthahatchee, Woody walked upon this land
As he and Stetson drilled in preparation for The Klan
So take another look at me and you will recognize
Beluthahatchee in my eyes

Beluthahatchee, site of Woody's final stand
The place where Stetson Kennedy once helped expose The Klan
A land in perfect harmony with nature so it seems
Beluthahatchee in my dreams

"Belu-tha-hatch-ee!" – You're in my dreams

Pass It Along

(By Scott Cook)

This guitar came from a timber, from the body of a tree
Through the workshop of a luthier, now it's on loan to me
It's good company after dinner, and it fits my hands just fine
But some day another singer with a pair of hands like mine
Will coax out songs much prettier still hiding in its strings
And sing stronger, braver words than I could ever sing
And folks are gonna love it, of this I'm almost sure
So I'll take good care of it, cause I'm borrowing it from her

Pass it along, pass it along
May it land in careful hands when we're gone
You carry it for a moment
But time won't loan it to you for long
You don't own it, pass it along

And I still love my country, though sometimes it's hard to recognize it
But I count myself lucky, to have been born inside it
And I'm grateful for the rights others struggled hard to win
And you can be sure I'm gonna fight when they try to take 'em back again
Oh, and everywhere are teachers, though some fell along the way
But the words they said still reach us, just like you're teaching me here today
And you may not speak it loud, but it's clear in what you do
So I hope to make you proud, 'cause I borrowed it from you

Pass it along, pass it along
May it land in careful hands when we're gone
You carry it for a moment
But time won't loan it to you for long
You don't own it, pass it along

Seems these days we're in a hurry, to grab up all that's left to use
Putting patents on discovery, making seeds that don't reproduce
If our vision is so narrow, seeing only bought and sold
We'll end up like the pharaohs, buried with their gold
We've all pushed this thing along, we've all been guided by our fear
But the river sings a song we've gotta be quieter to hear
It's in every child's face, new and hopeful as a stem
Best be gentle with this place, cause we're borrowing it from them

Pass it along, pass it along
May it land in careful hands when we're gone
You carry it for a moment
But time won't loan it to you for long
You don't own it, pass it along

Donnie Took A Dump All Over Twitter

Donnie took a dump all over Twitter
Now Bully Boy wants everyone to see
It's 3 AM but Donnie he's no quitter
He's pumping out that crap to you and me

Down here on the farm, we're all watching with alarm
'Cause there ain't nowhere that we can run away
From that hurricane of hate, that's how he communicates
We can't wait to see just what he'll spew today

(Chorus)

Doug:

I am just a simple man and I thought I had a plan
It was a minivan and a picket fence for me
Now I'm standing in this mob, one more guy without a job
And those stupid tweets don't bring me no relief

(Chorus)

Swing your partner round and round
Those rebel statues tumbling down
Just ignore the orange clown
'Til he goes away

When he posts another screed
Just turn off your Twitter feed
Willpower is all you need
Come on now, let's play

Rich:

In the old days on the road you'd drive for miles to find a phone
It was just you and whoever rode along
Now that stupid tweeting bird keeps on trying to be heard
Gonna drown it out when we all sing this song

Donnie took a dump all over Twitter
Now Bully Boy wants everyone to see
It's 3 AM but Donnie he's no quitter
He's pumping out that crap to you and me

One Day You Just Wake Up and You're Old

Close your eyes now, Nicky, I've got one more story left
Then I'll sing "Goodnight Irene" and put your name in once again
You know your uncle loves you and he'll be here 'til the end
But no one knows just how long that might be

Let me tell you something that my uncle said to me
Always stand on principle, and you'll always be free
Choose your best friends wisely, tend those friendships carefully
And then you'll never truly be alone

I'm running out of paper and I'm running out of time
I long ago ran out jokes and I'm running out of rhymes
And I spent too much time searching for a pot of gold
One day you just wake up and you're old

And when your eyes are open, you'll see things you can't ignore
How life rewards the powerful and shunts aside the poor
And once you've had a taste of it you'll keep on wanting more
And then you find out nothing comes for free

I'm running out of paper and I'm running out of time
I long ago ran out jokes and I'm running out of rhymes
You spend your life in labor trying to build a pot of gold
But one day you just wake up and you're rolled

So close your eyes now, Nicky, let me take you for a ride
We'll travel past the grief and loss come through the other side
If I could spare you all this pain, you know that I would try
But George's magic only goes so far

I'm running out of paper and I'm running out of time
I long ago ran out jokes and I'm running out of rhymes
And I put too much faith in people I was counting on
One day you just wake up and they're gone
Don't spend too much time searching for a pot of gold
One day you just wake up and you're old