

**America's Waiting** Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

There's a clock on the wall and a train on the track  
You step from the platform without looking back  
A seat by the window, a ticket to ride,  
the silver coach lurches and then starts to glide  
And lately you got a feeling inside that

Americas waiting... Americas waiting for you

You learn the old rhythms as you roll along  
The beat of the heartland is steady and strong  
Where steel rails stretch out just like old guitar strings...  
and a driving wheel bigger than God's gold earring  
strums them and you hear a continent sing

Americas waiting... America's waiting for you

In the tall mountain pines and green rolling plains  
In the roar of great rivers swollen with rain  
Where the red tail hawk wheels and the bald eagle soars and  
On the thermals that rise from the rock canyon rock floors  
From the Mexican gulf to the great northern shores

Americas waiting... America's waiting

In the strength and the spirit that's drawn up from this native soil  
You still see it shine in the faces of people who toil  
for a dream that slips away a little more each day

In the crumbling city, the boarded up town  
where the prison goes up and the factory shuts down  
In the church basement shelter, the soup kitchen door  
The eyes of the soldier just back from the war  
If you've never taken a good look before

Americas waiting... America's waiting for you  
For you.... Me too

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**Go Wake a Heart**      Lyrics and Music by John Flynn  
(Inspired by Kris Kristofferson's song "The Final Attraction")

Go do it gentle or go do it rough  
It can't be wrong if you do it for love  
Telling the truth is the best way to start  
Go sing your song, kid... Go wake a heart

Do it with laughter... do it with tears  
Like all your heroes... down through the years  
The band won't need lyric sheets, tempo or charts  
Watch for the changes... Go wake a heart

Chorus:

Strap on that guitar and open a vein  
Bleed for the ones who sleep out in the rain  
The lost and the lonely, the shackled and scarred  
Once more, with feeling... Go wake a heart

Some hearts stop loving ... and some hearts fall deep  
Into a trance that's more dangerous than sleep  
Under a spell this world spins... from the dark  
Step to the spotlight...Go wake a heart

Howl if you have to...whisper and rant  
Cure what you can cure and heal what you can't  
The night is like kindling... it just needs a spark  
Go strike the match kid... Go wake a heart

Make every last show its own work of art  
Go sign the canvas... Go wake a heart

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**Chicken House**      Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

At Harden place on Jersey Road just over the state line  
Smoke and fire filled the sky along 'bout supper time  
He dialed 911 and then John Harden soaked a towel  
With water and ran in to where he'd heard his two dogs howl

Dog dies, man hurt, chicken house burns

Wet towel on his head John Culver entered hell and stood  
Where flames feasted on years of chicken dropping and dry wood  
While over in the corner Buck and Luther cringed and bayed  
Buck came when John called him but old Luther disobeyed

Dog dies, man hurt, chicken house burns

John tried to get to Luther but infernos intervened  
Years won't take away the things his blood shot eyes have seen  
And when he tells his story those who love dogs understand  
The catch in old John's whisper and the burns on old John's hands

Dog dies, man hurt, chicken house burns

No chickens were injured in the writing of this song  
The coop was used for storage all the feathered tenants gone  
No sign of cause or origin the fire marshal said  
And in the next day's local that big headline simply read

Dog dies, man hurt, as chicken house burns

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## **The Passunder (New Orleans )**

Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

If someday we realize that God still speaks to us all  
In our hearts not just through words that long dead prophets scrawled  
Perhaps we'll add a new book to the holy bible called  
New Orleans, New Orleans

As in ancient Egypt when the Exodus began  
when shacks of pharaoh's slaves were painted with the of lambs  
FEMA marked the Ninth Ward houses with orange spray paint cans... in  
New Orleans, New Orleans

Passover ... Angel of Death  
Born on the wind of a hurricane's breath  
Pass over... Pharaoh's own son  
Peered the from the window of Air Force One

Moses cried to Pharaoh, Pharaoh let my people go  
Now poor folks clung to rooftops when the levees wouldn't hold  
Both times the waters parted but it happed awful slow ...in  
New Orleans, New Orleans

Moses led a chosen people cross the Sea of Reeds  
Now a broken promise land lies in the mud and bleeds  
For lives lost or scattered like a broken string of beads in  
New Orleans, New Orleans

Passunder ... What man has caused  
As the sun bleeds and the sky turns to gauze  
Past plunder ... sowing the breeze  
Reaping the whirlwind ... down on our knees

For forty years in wilderness the Israelites did roam  
Now like the pyramids a former tomb called Super Dome  
Stands watch for a new Moses who'll cry Bring my people home ... to  
New Orleans, New Orleans

If someday we realize that God still speaks to us all  
In our hearts not just through words that long dead prophets scrawled  
We'll heal this wounded city and make strong the levee walls ... in  
New Orleans, New Orleans

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**Semper Fi** Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

[This song is the true story of Iraq war vet Eric Hall who suffered from PTSD and was found dead in a Florida storm drain three weeks after Vietnam Vets had mounted an exhaustive state-wide search for him.]

Charlie found the tip of the iceberg shielded from the Florida sun  
wedged just like a misfired cartridge... in the barrel of a large concrete gun  
Charlie laid down his knife and flashlight... crawled out of the culvert to say  
This mother's son was wounded in action... but inaction took his life away

Eric had become agitated... reliving again and again  
the I.E.D. that tore up his body...the bomb that blew away his best friend  
Men whose war was 40 years older saddled up when they heard the call  
A fellow marine had gone missing, a former corporal named Eric Hall

Semper fi ... always faithful... Tell me why we lost track  
This marine served his country then this country turned its back

Authorities had called off the manhunt for the skinny kid with the limp  
But Vietnam vets this land gave up on would not give up searching for him  
They found his motorcycle abandoned out where the palm trees and terrain  
looked just like the Euphrates valley... right next to a large concrete drain

Semper fi ... always faithful... Tell me why we lost track  
This marine served his country then this country turned its back

He fought for this land and saluted...The same stars and stripes on a pole  
that waved goodbye when that fight left him...with scars and stripes on his soul

His ashes first went to Indiana... Brothers that he never had known  
showed up from all over this country making sure that Eric got home  
Now he'll rest in Arlington pastures... but the tale is still left to tell  
How many who have fought for their country are living Eric's nightmare as well

Because Charlie found the tip of the iceberg ...

## **The Cure**

Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

A tree once sprouted in an ancient city  
Its leaves were deadly poison so they say  
Some cried build a cage around it  
Some screamed cut it down  
But a wise man said let's find a way  
to understand what makes the tree so dangerous  
For he was both a healer and a sage  
>From its leaves he brewed medicine  
to give the city's sick children  
and fight the desperate illness of their age

Sometimes the cure for the pain is in the pain  
Baby put the spoon up to your lips  
Sometimes the truth is running in your vein  
Sometimes it slips... through your finger tips

Black men grew up in a white man's city  
Branded dangers to society  
Some cried build a cage around them  
Some screamed cut'em down  
We locked them up and threw away the key  
Though boys can grow wild without men beside them  
on streets so full of hopelessness and rage  
we strip poor neighborhoods and schools  
and families of the very tools  
they need to fight the illness of our age

Sometimes the cure for the pain is in the pain  
Baby put the spoon up to your lips  
Sometimes the truth is running in your vein  
Sometimes it drips... from your finger tips

All trees have roots brother justice reminds us  
you can't put men's eyes out then curse them for blindness  
All trees have roots brother justice reminds us  
again and again and again

Sometimes the cure for the pain is in the pain  
Baby put the spoon up to your lips  
Sometimes the truth is running in your vein  
Sometimes it rips... from your finger tips

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**The Darker the Night (the Brighter the Stars)**

Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

[This song is dedicated to the memory of Marian Fisher a thirteen year old Amish girl who said "Shoot me first" to her killer in order to buy time for her sister and classmates in a one-room schoolhouse in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania in October of 2006.]

Some nights when the dark is all I can see  
and it seems an eternity  
since I felt the sun shine on me  
My eyes gradually adjust to the sights  
of the most incredible lights  
shining all around me so bright  
It's a wonder that I never noticed before  
Once the moonlight hid the glow but not anymore

The darker the night  
the brighter the stars  
That give hope and light  
to this world of ours  
This world of ours...

Like thrown fists the stupid things I've been seeing  
Done to and done by human beings  
land and knock the wind out of me  
So I try to steel myself and get hard  
Find new ways to keep up my guard  
'Til love, unafraid and unscarred  
Shines with beauty I can't comprehend  
And it takes my breath away again

The darker the night  
the brighter the stars  
That give hope and light  
to this world of ours

When I'm lost at sea my soul can steer by  
Blazing constellations in the night sky...

It's a wonder that I never noticed before  
Once the moonlight hid the glow but not anymore

The darker the night  
the brighter the stars...

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## **Reggie's Question (What's In A Name)**

Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

My name is addict... my name is thief  
My name is gangster... my name is grief  
My name is inmate... that is my shame  
And so I ask you What's in a name

My name is dealer... my name is thug  
My name is hustler... violence and drugs  
have been my life now... it's called the game  
And so I ask you What's in a name

My name is father, my name is son  
My name was stolen a couple hundred  
years ago by white men with chains  
Sometimes I wonder What's in a name

Some names I've taken... some I have earned  
Some give me strength while others have burned  
crosses and bridges with hatred's flame  
There's no disguising what's in a name

My name is father, my name is son  
My name was stole a couple hundred  
years ago but when I complain  
You shrug and ask me What's in a name  
My name is dear to those who love me  
My name is fear to those who don't see  
That in our hearts we are all the same  
I'm only human... What's in a name

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**The Prodigal Father** Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

Two weeks out of prison he was standing at the door  
of the man who'd married his ex-wife  
The man who'd been providing for the family he had lost  
And taken his place in his child's life  
He'd hidden down the block and watched his ex-wife drive away  
He'd seen his little boy drive off with her  
He rang the bell and waited 'til the man answered the door  
Then to that frightened man he said these words

Thank you for loving my son  
I know he thought I abandoned him  
It's good to know he's got someone  
Thank you for loving my son

Humbly he stood there speaking through that locked screen door  
of the grateful feeling in his soul  
All those years he'd wake in prison, knowing someone kind would pour  
cheerios into his child's bowl  
He said I know from his mother that you treat him as your own  
And that the boy's been growing strong and true  
He's better off without me so don't tell him I was here  
But mister I just had to say to you

Thank you for loving my son  
I know he thought I abandoned him  
It's good to know he's got someone  
Thank you for loving my son

The man just said You're welcome as he opened that screen door  
They shook hands and he turned and walked away  
He must have walked for hours then he stopped into a church  
He prayed and in his heart heard a voice say

Thank you for loving my son  
I know he thought I abandoned him  
It's good to know he's got someone  
Thank you for loving my son

**Without You with Me** Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

They tell me now that you must say goodbye  
Though I'm not sure just for how long or why  
I must begin walking under a sky  
Without you with me

They say every hour glass runs out of sand  
And that I have to let go of your hand  
And that my tomorrow today should be planned  
Without you with me

They say things can change in the blink of a tear  
But your courage taught me that I shouldn't fear  
Come what may your love will always been here in my heart

Nothing is ever the way that it seems  
I have my memories... I have my dreams and  
so I will never know quite what life means  
Without you with me

Your strength and your spirit are now part of me  
along with the joy that we've shared so you see  
Although you go away I'll never be  
Without you with me

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**The Jesse Tree**      Lyrics and Music by John Flynn

Then I heard Isaiah shout  
From the stump a shoot shall sprout  
And from the root a branch shall spring  
God is changing everything

**Chorus:**

Oh children come with me  
and we shall trim the Jesse tree  
Praise God and glory be  
Born us of the Jesse tree  
Born us of the Jesse tree

Lighted candles in the dark  
John and Matthew, Luke and Mark  
Jeremiah, Samuel, Micah and Ezekiel  
Foretold in the prophecies  
Of two hundred centuries  
God shall soon among us dwell  
We'll call him Emmanuel **chorus**

The ornaments upon each bough  
Will tell tales of the Gospel plow  
Noah's rainbow, David's lyre  
And others that the Book inspired  
Jesse's staff, Josiah's scroll,  
The whale that swallowed Jonah whole  
The lions that for Daniel slept,  
The tears that Hezekiah wept  
The crown from Solomon's own head,  
The stalk of wheat Ruth harvested  
Jacobs ladder, Joseph's coat,  
The shell, the dove and fishing boat  
A manger and a lily white  
The star that shown that Christmas night  
A scepter, sword, and little lamb  
who shall be called the son of man **chorus**

Then I heard Isaiah shout  
from the stump a shoot shall sprout  
And from the roots a branch shall spring  
God is changing everything