

After The Fire

An album of eleven original recordings by Michael Shainline

All music and lyrics by Michael Shainline except lyrics for "Te Recuerdo Como Eras," from Pablo Neruda's *Poema 6*.

After the Fire (Track 1)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, and bass

Verse 1:

It was after the fire but just before the flood
The ashes had been blown away but we had shed no blood
We sat among the singing birds and the fruit trees all abud
It was after the fire but just before the flood

Verse 2:

When nature is a threat with no chance to run away
You fear you will lose everything when your land is ablaze
But after the smoke had cleared and we saw through the haze
We thought the worst was over and hoped for better days

Chorus 1:

We convinced ourselves that the threat of harm was through
Trust in some higher force and start our lives anew
Publicly declare our faithful point of view
We were the chosen, we'd be spared what others would go through

Verse 3:

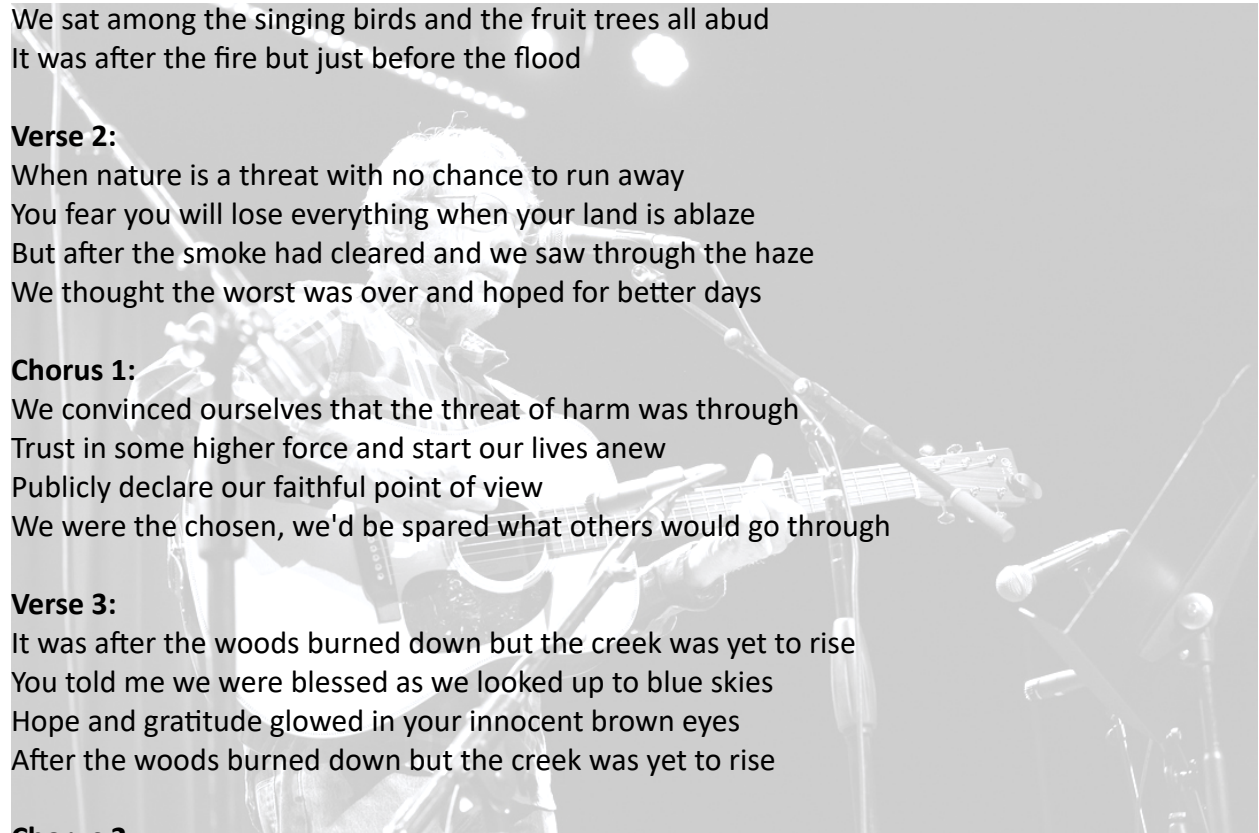
It was after the woods burned down but the creek was yet to rise
You told me we were blessed as we looked up to blue skies
Hope and gratitude glowed in your innocent brown eyes
After the woods burned down but the creek was yet to rise

Chorus 2:

What self-serving voice told us that everything was fine
He heard from a higher source we could ignore the sign
Change would be disruptive, better hold on to that line
At worst we thought his words were simply benign

Chorus 1:

What foolish way of thinking said our wishes had come true
As if to praise the patron force was all we had to do
Publicly declare our faithful point of view
We were the chosen, we were spared what others would go through



Verse 4:

Anger had passed, we knew not grief was yet to come
We heard the grateful fiddle and the celebration drum
Danced as if we thought eternal comfort had been won
Anger had passed, we knew not grief was yet to come

Chorus 2:

What self-serving voice told us that everything was fine
He heard from a higher source we could ignore the sign
Change would be disruptive, better hold on to that line
At worst we thought his words were simply benign

Verse 1:

It was after the fire but just before the flood
The ashes had been blown away but we had shed no blood
We sat among the singing birds and the fruit trees all about
It was after the fire but just before the flood

That Old Brick House North of Colfax (Track 2)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Verse 1:

That old brick house north of Colfax
Stood for nearly eighty years
And for most of my adult life
It sheltered my laughter and tears

Verse 2:

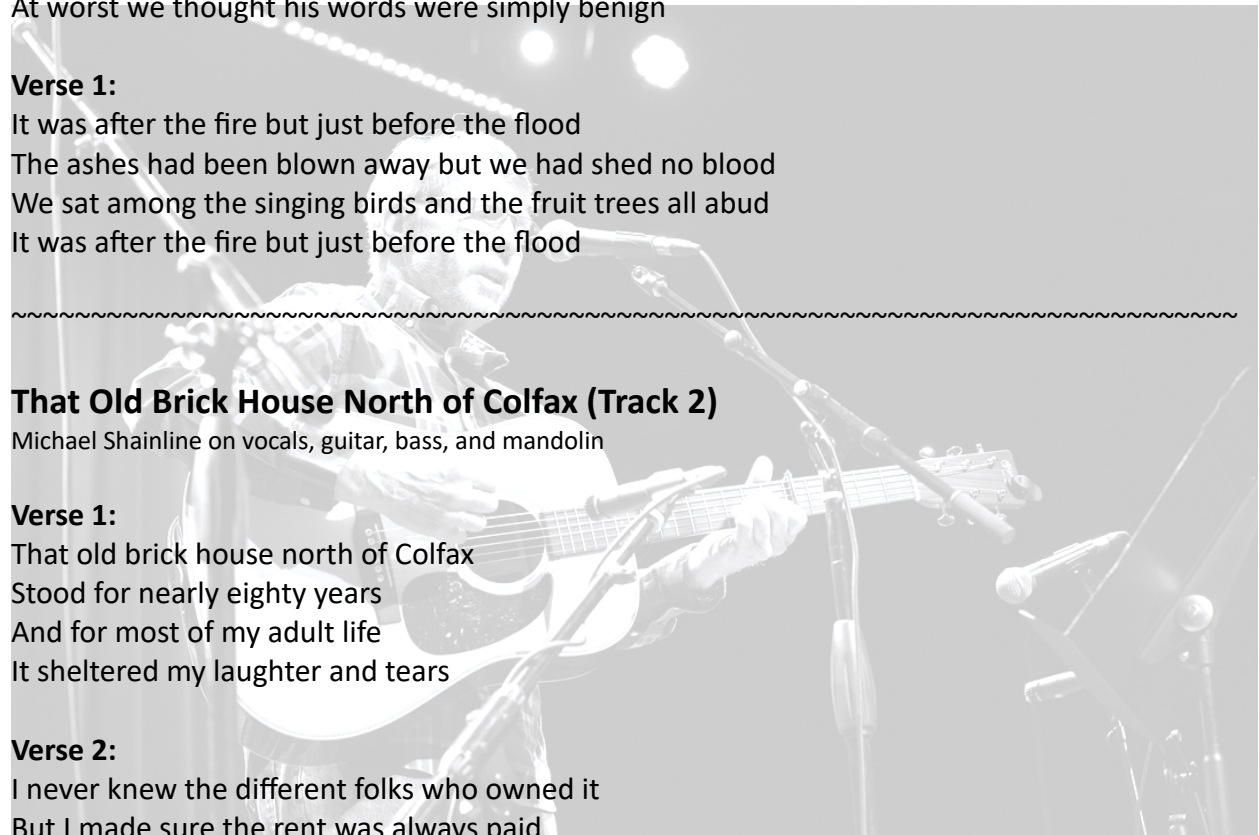
I never knew the different folks who owned it
But I made sure the rent was always paid
Til one day I found a note taped to the door
Said find another place to stay

Chorus:

They've scraped the homes from the old block
New condos hide the light
They've cleared my camp from the bank of the river
Where will I sleep tonight?

Verse 3:

I fought my country's battles



Paid my tax when it was due
And now I feel like a stray dog
Seeing what my life has turned into

Verse 4:

'Neath bridges, or on a park bench
We're frostbitten we're sunburned
We eat whatever scraps we happen to find
Live off the handouts we've earned

Chorus:

They've scraped the homes from the old block
New condos hide the light
They've cleared my camp from the bank of the river
Where will I sleep tonight?

Bridge:

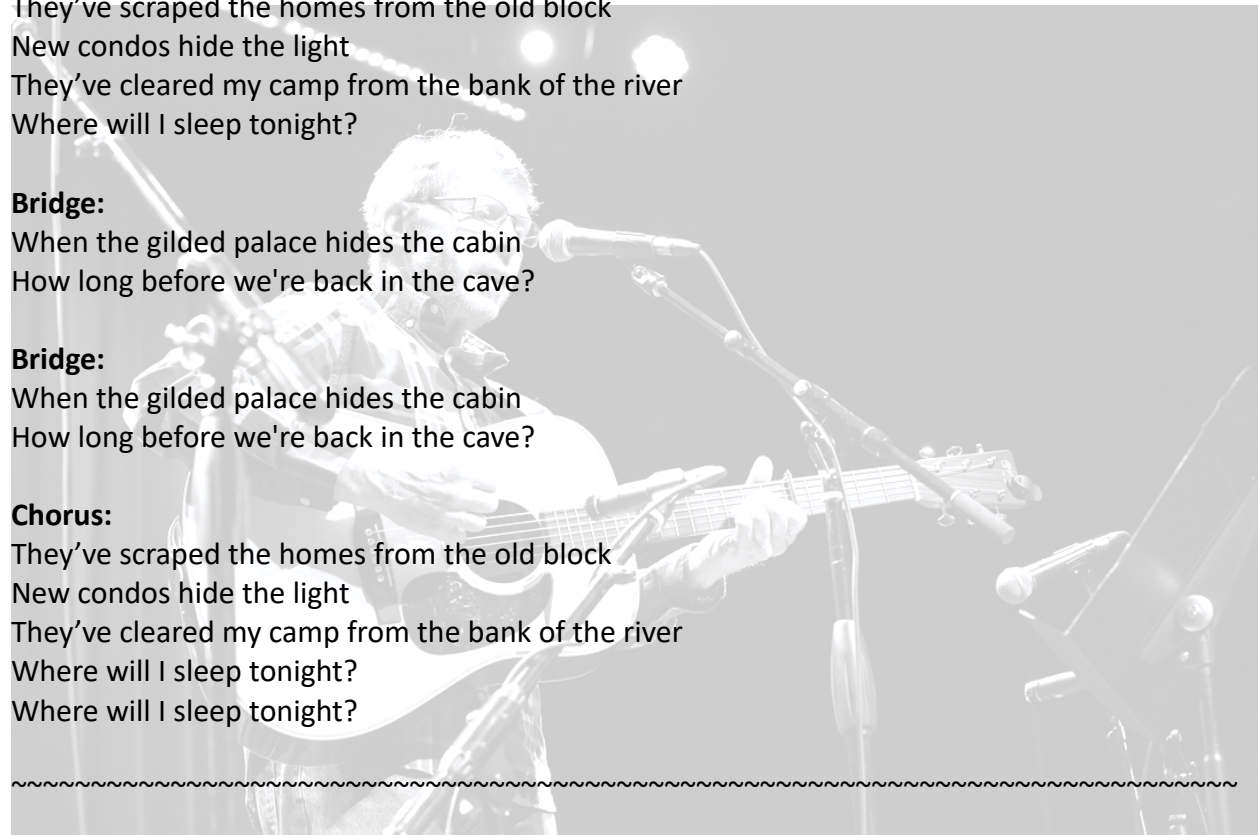
When the gilded palace hides the cabin
How long before we're back in the cave?

Bridge:

When the gilded palace hides the cabin
How long before we're back in the cave?

Chorus:

They've scraped the homes from the old block
New condos hide the light
They've cleared my camp from the bank of the river
Where will I sleep tonight?
Where will I sleep tonight?



Great Southwest River (Track 3)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Verse 1:

Great southwest river
How generously you flow
From melting snows in the San Juan Mountains
To the Gulf of Mexico

Verse 2:

Great, southwest river

So many have sung to you
In praise of your life-giving waters
And the places those waters run through

Chorus:

The soul of the San Luis Valley
And the Pueblos of New Mexico
A ribbon of green through the canyons and plains
Where your southbound waters flow

Verse 3:

Through crimson canyon walls
Your rushing waters made
Past willows, reeds, and sandbars
Where cranes and herons wade

Verse 4:

Ditches, pools and dams
irrigated land
Easing hunger and thirst
Giving work to honest hands

Chorus:

The soul of the San Luis Valley
And the Pueblos of New Mexico
A ribbon of green through the canyons and plains
Where your southbound waters flow

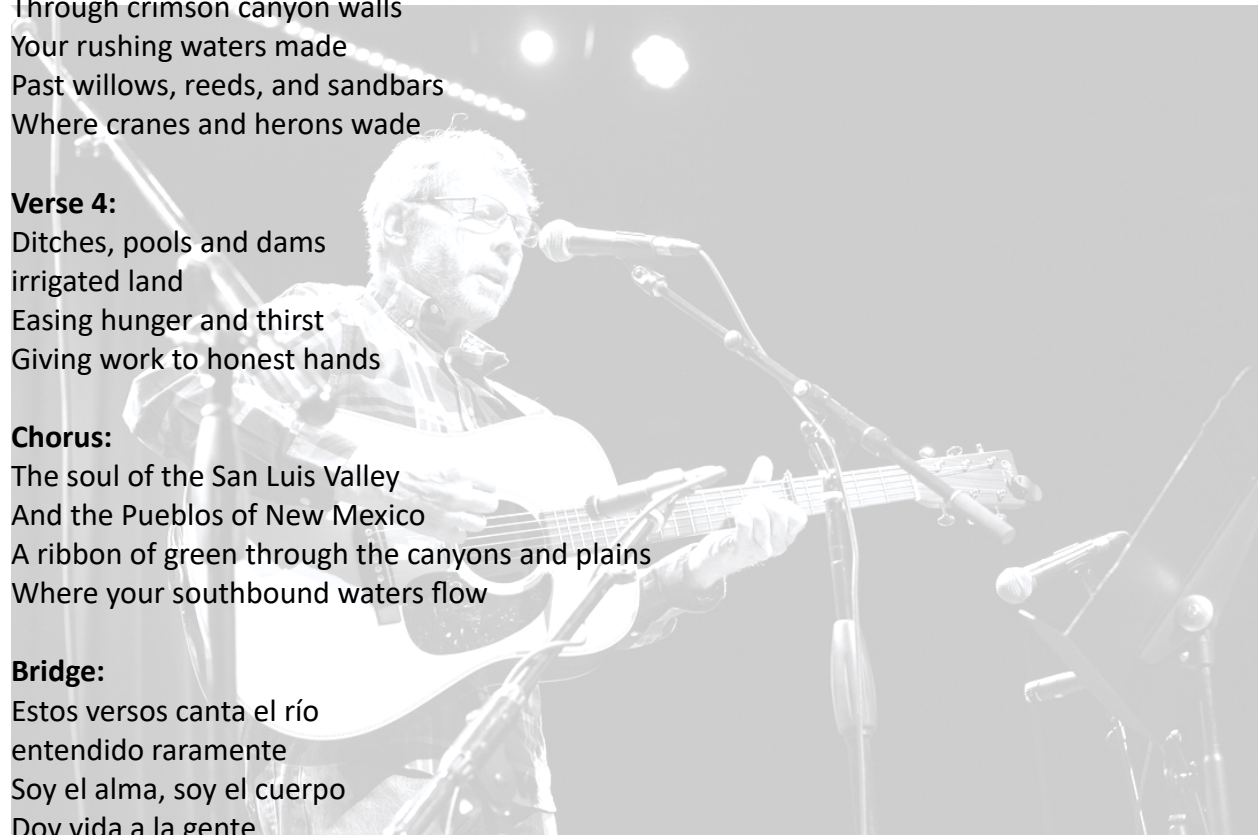
Bridge:

Estos versos canta el río
entendido raramente
Soy el alma, soy el cuerpo
Doy vida a la gente

The language of the river
Rhymes with life along its shore
Will the language be forgotten
If the river flows no more?

Verse 5:

Oh, Rio Grande
Under rising heat
Your sources now are shrinking
Your waters in retreat



Verse 6:

Oh, Rio Grande
It's not just for you we cry
But our land and all that live there
If your banks should ever run dry

But our land and all that live there
If your banks should ever run dry

Kingston Retreat (Track 4) (Instrumental)

Michael Shainline on guitar, bass, and mandolin

I Wear a Cross Around My Neck (Track 5)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Chorus:

I know truth, I wear a cross around my neck
I know virtue, it's my righteousness blank check
I can do no wrong, I've got Jesus on display
I walk in light, how can you doubt a word I say

Verse 1:

This is a Christian nation, and I'm gonna say it
The red, white and blue, you can be sure I will display it
Revelation, when the curtain falls away
I wear my cross, so the Lord can find me on that day

Verse 2:

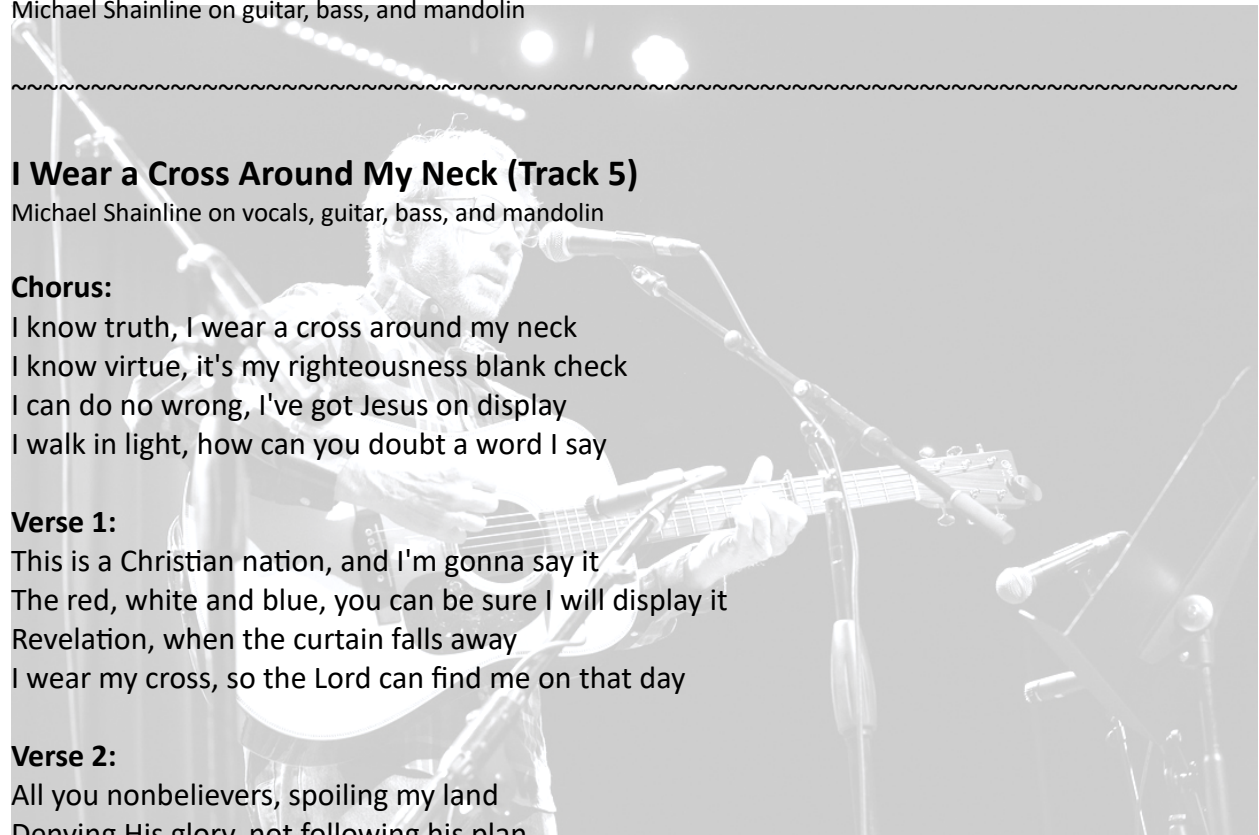
All you nonbelievers, spoiling my land
Denying His glory, not following his plan
Ignoring the mighty sword that he swings from his hand
I pity your souls when before Him you will stand

Chorus:

I know truth, I wear a cross around my neck
I know virtue, it's my righteousness blank check
I can do no wrong, I've got Jesus on display
I walk in light, how can you doubt a word I say

Verse 3:

I believe the truth was known two thousand years ago



The Bible contains everything I need to know
It's all the sacred word from my Messiah's mighty pen
And you should not be reading anything written since then

Verse 4:

When God founded America, long before you and me
He said, I want it this way, so gosh darn, let it be
I Don't want women voting, I endorse slavery,
And you can take the land from the Iroquois and Cherokee

Chorus:

I know truth, I wear a cross around my neck
I know virtue, it's my righteousness blank check
I can do no wrong, I've got Jesus on display
I walk in light, how can you doubt a word I say

Verse 5:

The blasphemy of science, and the curse of philosophy
Are both an evil effort to adulterate you and me
But if you wear your crucifix then you can not go wrong
The cross and your gun with the lord will keep you strong

Verse 6:

My blond haired, blue eyed Jesus, he loves me this I know
When he comes back all liberal ways of thinking have to go
But we're not gonna wait for the cleansing to begin
We're writing legislation to eliminate all sin

Chorus:

I know truth, I wear a cross around my neck
I know virtue, it's my righteousness blank check
I can do no wrong, I've got Jesus on display
I walk in light, how can you doubt a word I say



Nobody's Thoughts or Prayers (Track 6)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Verse 1:

I've kept my story to myself pretty much in recent years
I don't have much to laugh about I guess I've shed some tears
I took a handout once or twice to have enough to eat
You'll see somebody's thrown out shoes covering my feet

Chorus:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

Verse 2:

My Daddy made his living digging up Kentucky coal
And I knew when I was young that I'd go down that same dark hole
My brothers and my cousins and my neighbors knew it too
With what they taught us back in school there was nothing else to do

Chorus:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

Bridge:

I'll tell you how some words lose their meaning through the years
And those old sacred phrases just ring hollow in my ears

Verse 3:

My rusted F-150 still gets me in to town
But lord knows how I'll fix it the next time it breaks down
The politicians tell me my old job is coming back
But wind and sun make power now so I ain't buying that

Chorus:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

Verse 4:

My wife grew tired of this coal mine town and took my son away
She ran off to the city where she still lives today
When my son was old enough he signed up for the war
Ever since he came back I don't know him anymore

Chorus:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

Bridge:

I'll tell you how some words lose their meaning through the years
And those old sacred phrases just ring hollow in my ears

Verse 5:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

I'll tell you how some words lose their meaning through the years
And those old sacred phrases just ring hollow in my ears

My wife grew tired of this coal mine town and took my son away
She ran off to the city where she still lives today
When my son was old enough he signed up for the war
Ever since he came back I don't know him anymore

Breathing just get tougher with each day that goes by
The doctor says I'm sick but he won't tell me why
Most old guys around here got the same disease as me
I think it's slowly killing us, I guess we'll wait and see

Chorus:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

Verse 6:

I've kept my story to myself pretty much in recent years
I don't have much to laugh about I guess I've shed some tears
I took a handout once or twice to have enough to eat
You'll see somebody's thrown out shoes covering my feet

Chorus:

Nobody's gonna change things back to how they were before
And nobody's thoughts or prayers can bring me comfort anymore

Empty Tonight (Track 7)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Verse 1:

Oh, Lord, I'm feeling empty tonight
The skies are angry, the air just don't seem right
That hopeful horizon hides out of sight
Oh, Lord, I'm feeling empty tonight

Verse 2:

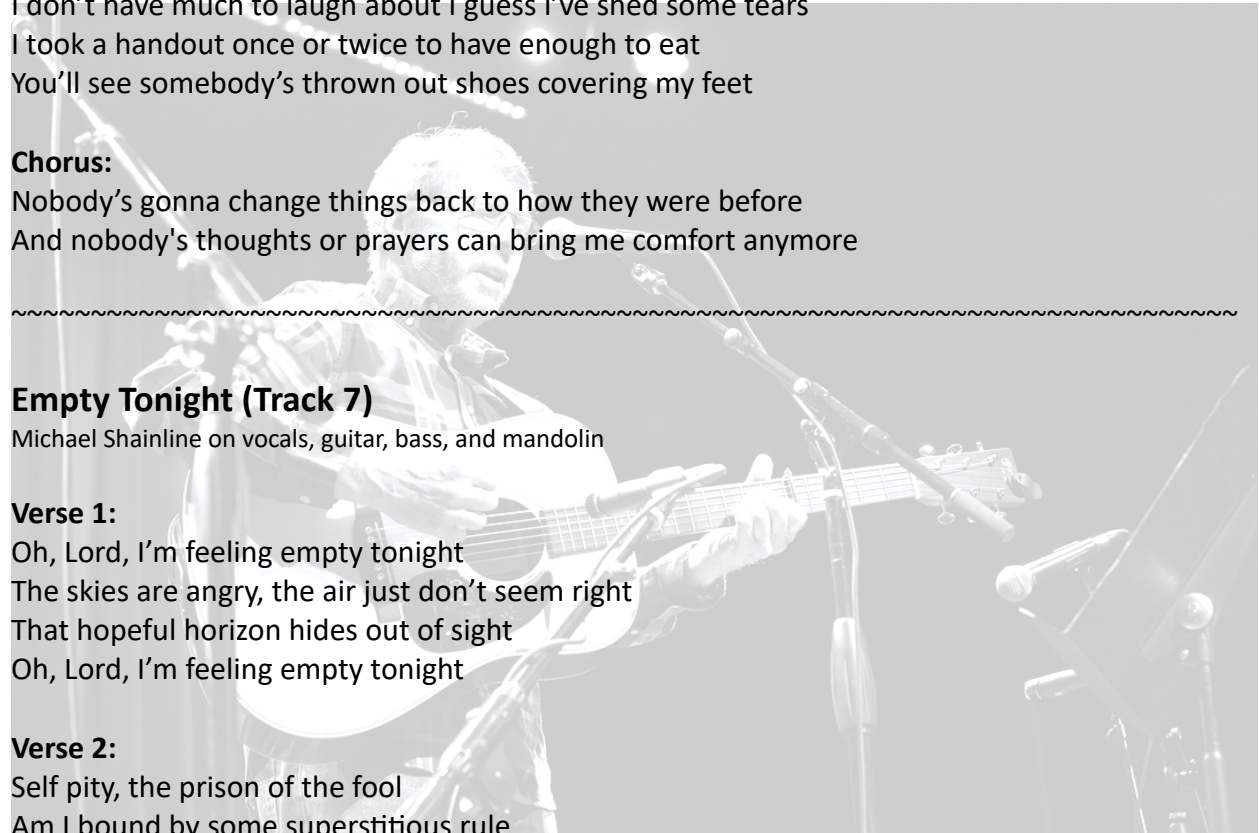
Self pity, the prison of the fool
Am I bound by some superstitious rule
Clear my conscience by treating myself cruel
Self pity, the prison of the fool

Chorus:

I've broken other's hearts before
Others have broken mine
It's not quite like what the poets say
Regrets and wounds don't fade with time

Verse 3:

Oh, Lord, I'm feeling empty tonight



To the ones I've hurt, how can I make things right?
How can my own broken heart become a source of light?
If I believed in prayer, I'd ask these things tonight

Chorus:

I've broken other's hearts before
Others have broken mine
It's not quite like what the poets say
Regrets and wounds don't fade with time

Verse 3:

Oh, Lord, I'm feeling empty tonight
To the ones I've hurt, how can I make things right?
How can my own broken heart become a source of light?
If I believed in prayer, I'd ask these things tonight

If I believed in prayer, I'd ask these things tonight

Bitter Ale Tonight (Track 8)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, and bass

Verse 1:

I found myself sitting on my porch tonight
Watching couples holding hands in the fading light
Love Like I used to know
Not that long ago
Now I'm alone and I find I'm feeling right

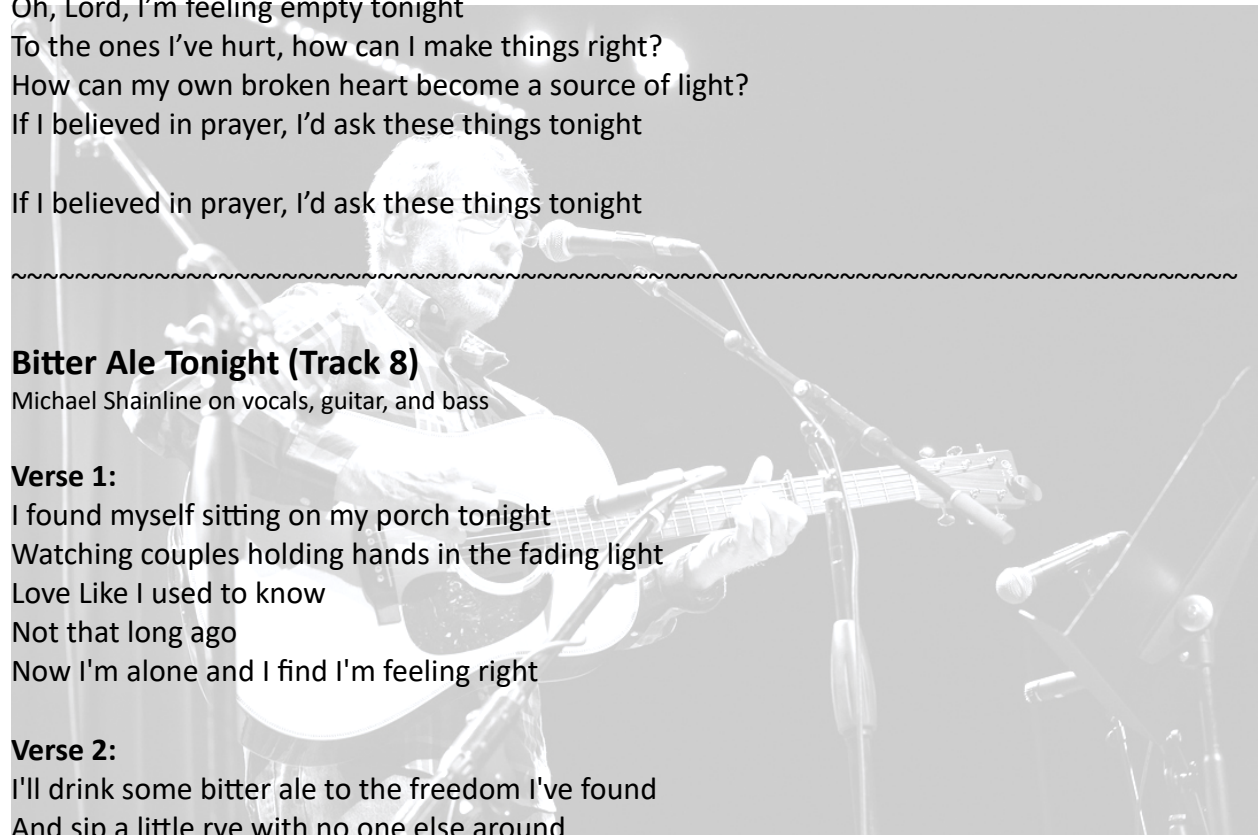
Verse 2:

I'll drink some bitter ale to the freedom I've found
And sip a little rye with no one else around
To the time I spend alone
To being on my own
To this front porch king who wears a brand new crown

Chorus:

We tell ourselves what we need to believe
It's human nature to self-deceive
Lie to ourselves so we don't have to grieve
Is there something else that we can't perceive?

Bridge:



No one to point out the things that I do wrong
No restless body beside me all night long
I don't have to hear her say those words "I care"
Whoa, I didn't mean to go there
Alone on this porch tonight is where I belong

Chorus:

We tell ourselves what we need to believe
It's human nature to self-deceive
Lie to ourselves so we don't have to grieve
Is there something else that we can't perceive?

Verse 3:

It's bitter ale tonight and Kentucky rye
It's better than a woman to satisfy
She told me we were out of time
No reason to change her mind
As long as there's something to swallow to protect my pride
A line to feed myself and something to imbibe

Once the Lovin' Is Over (Track 9)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, and bass

Verse 1:

If you pass on the street she might nod, or she might just walk by
If you pass on the street she might nod, or she might just walk by
She might glance down at her feet just to avoid your eye

Verse 2:

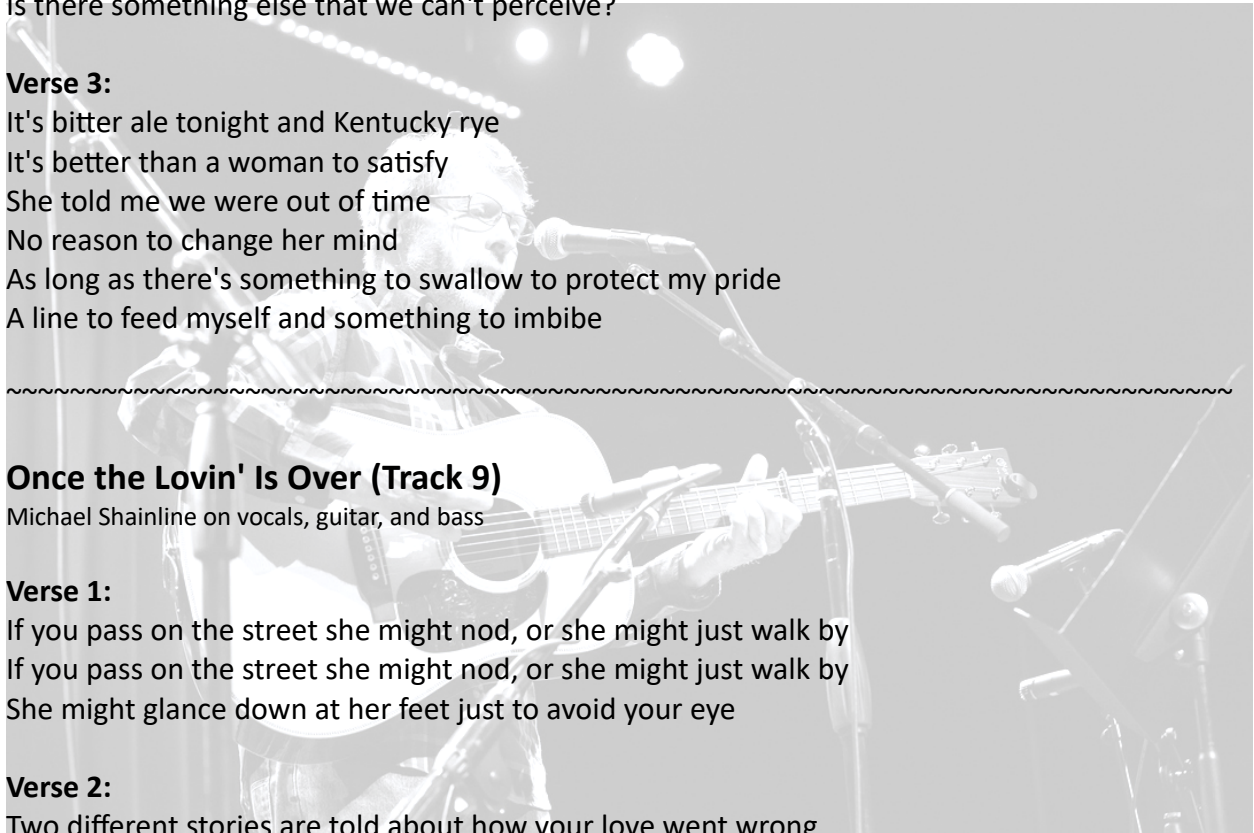
Two different stories are told about how your love went wrong
Two different stories are told about how your love went wrong
Friends disagree over who sings the sadder song

Chorus:

'Cause I've heard once the lovin' is over
Once the passion has come to an end
I've heard once the thrill of the flesh is gone
You can never be friends again

Verse 3:

Next time think twice before you jump into her bed



Next time think twice before you jump into her bed
You might find a lover but you might lose a friend instead

Chorus:

'Cause I've heard once the lovin' is over
Once the passion has come to an end
I've heard once the thrill of the flesh is gone
You can never be friends again

Verse 1:

If you pass on the street she might nod, or she might just walk by
If you pass on the street she might nod, or she might just walk by
She might glance down at her feet just to avoid your eye

Te Recuerdo Como Eras (Track 10) ("Poema 6" by Pablo Neruda)*

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Verse 1:

Te recuerdo como eras en el último otoño.
Eras la boina gris y el corazón en calma.
En us ojos peleaban las llamas del crepúsculo.
Y las hojas caían en el agua de tu alma.

Verse 2:

Apegada a mis brazos como una enredadera,
Las hojas recogían tu voz lenta y en calma.
Hoguera de stupor en que mi sed ardía.
Dulce jacinto azul, torcido sobre me alma.

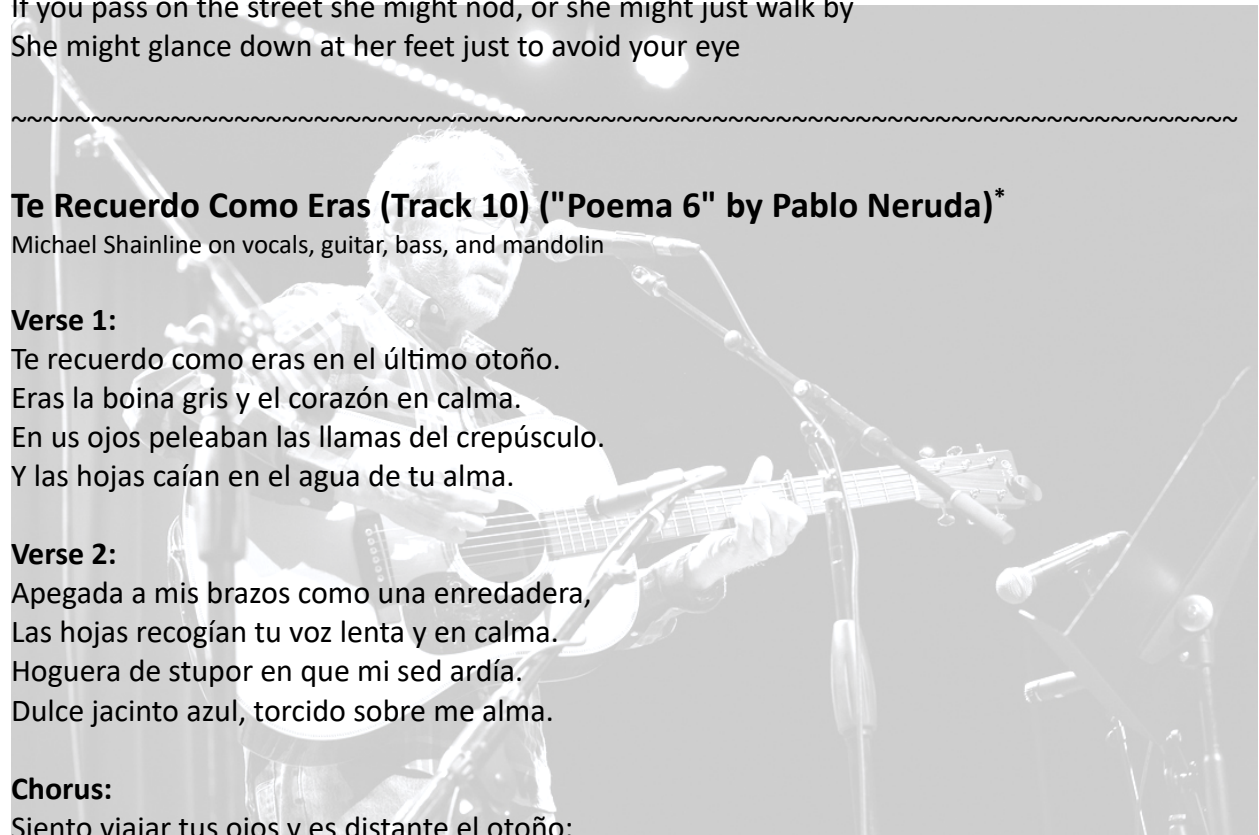
Chorus:

Siento viajar tus ojos y es distante el otoño:
Boina gris, voz de pájaro y corazón de casa
Hacia donde emigraban mis profundos anhelos
Y caían mis besos alegres como brasas.

Verse 3:

Cielo desde un navío, campo desde los cerros:
Tu recuerdo es de luz, de humo, de estanque en calma!
Más allá de sus ojos ardían los crepúsculos.
Hojas secas de otoño giraban en tu alma.

(repeat chorus)



(repeat verse 3)

Shelter, Food, and Recreation (Track 11)

Michael Shainline on vocals, guitar, bass, and mandolin

Verse 1:

Shelter, food, and recreation
Kindness, health, and education
What we work for, what we live for

Verse 2:

Isn't really complicated
Shouldn't have to be debated
Just take less, give some more

Chorus:

There's plenty for all who need
If we don't give in to greed

Verse 3:

Each side has its own solution
Never reaching resolution
All self-serving, never swerving

Verse 4:

Patronize the population
Thrive on self-congratulation
Never help the most deserving

Chorus:

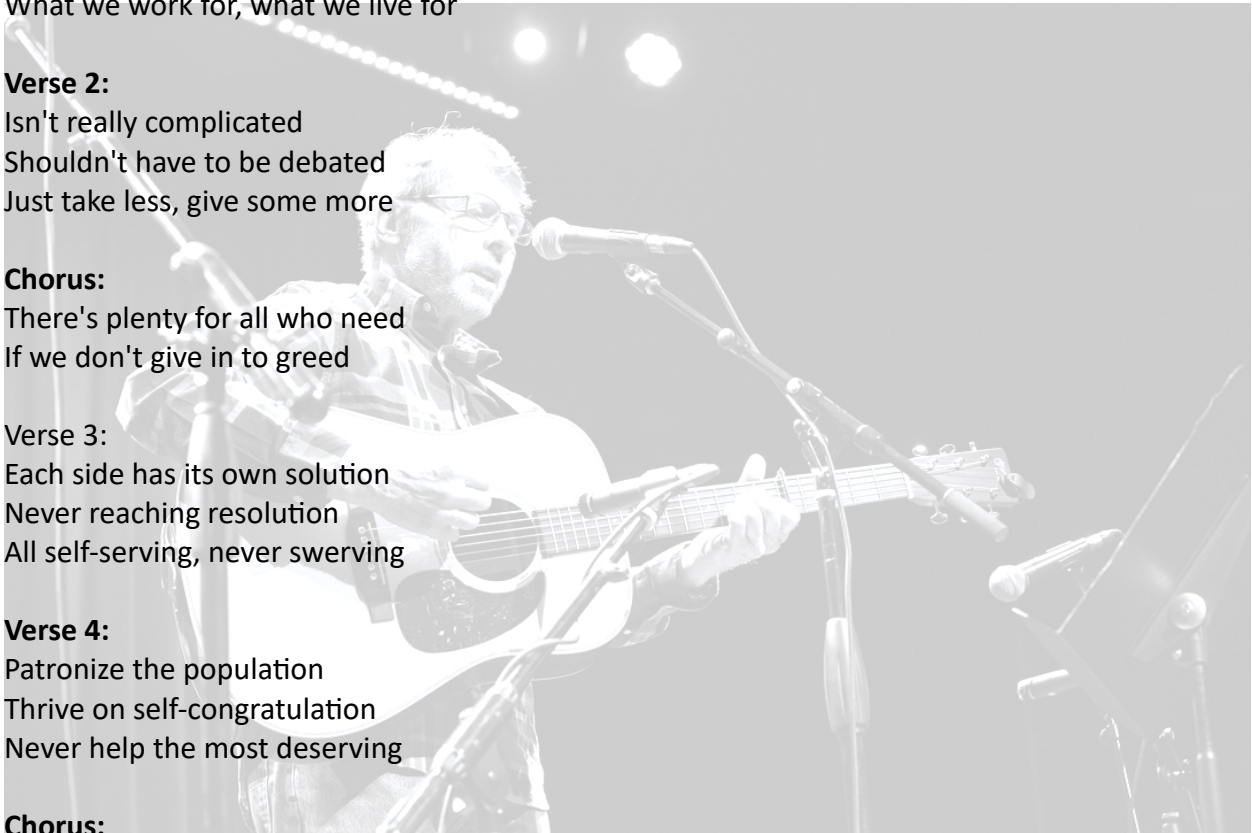
There's plenty for all who need
If we don't give in to greed

Verse 1:

Shelter, food, and recreation
Kindness, health, and education
What we work for, what we live for

Verse 2:

Isn't really complicated
Shouldn't have to be debated



Just take less, give some more

Chorus:

There's plenty for all who need
If we don't give in to greed



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* I remember you as you were that final autumn.
You were a gray beret and the whole being at peace.
In your eyes the fires of the evening dusk were battling,
and the leaves were falling in the waters of your soul.

As attached to my arms as a morning glory,
your sad, slow voice was picked up by the leaves.
Bonfire of astonishment in which my thirst was burning.
Soft blue of hyacinth twisting above my soul.

I feel your eyes travel and the autumn is distant:
gray beret, voice of a bird, and heart like a house
toward which my profound desires were emigrating
and my thick kisses were falling like hot coals.

The sky from a ship. The plains from a hill:
your memory is of light, of smoke, of a still pool!
Beyond your eyes the evening dusks were battling.
Dry leaves of autumn were whirling in your soul.

Translated by Robert Bly

