

The Stories behind The Songs



Glenn Alexander & Shadowland

Knockin' On The Door

This song just hit me while I was riding on a tour bus, lookin' out the window. It represents many areas of life to me – and, I hope for others – when you are trying to get someone's attention, trying to make a connection. But, no matter what you do, they just don't see you, you can't get their attention, or they are not interested. It is about trying to be accepted in any situation - work, friends, groups and no matter how you try, you just don't fit in. Despite having many record deals when I was younger, I can't seem to get arrested now - I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in. It is representative of different relationships I have had in my life, both professional and personal, where I'm always on the outside tryin' to get in, always on the outside and always lookin' in. Can't get your attention, I can't seem to win, can't get your attention, guess I don't fit in.

I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in
I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in
I keep knockin' on the door, it's a goddamn sin
I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in

Always on the outside tryin' to get in
Always on the outside tryin' to get in
Always on the outside I'm always lookin' in
Always on the outside tryin' to get in

Been runnin' so long and runnin' so hard
My feet are bleedin' and my soul is charred
Ain't no rhyme, ain't no reason, I don't understand
Ya can't stop me Lord 'cause I'm a hungry man

I can't get your attention, can't seem to win
I can't get your attention, can't seem to win
I can't get your attention, guess I don't fit in
I can't get your attention, can't seem to win

I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in
I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in
I keep knockin' on the door, it's wearin' pretty thin
I keep knockin' on the door, but you won't let me in

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I Suffer In Silence

A song I wrote many years ago with my very talented and good friend Stan Schwartz. I think most of us have been here a time or two, as well. Maybe the settings or scenes are different, but the feelings are similar. Your true love has left you, dumped you, walked out. Maybe you deserved it, maybe not. But there you sit, smoking the third pack of cigarettes that day, haven't eaten for days, beer bottles are piling up, your life is in the shitter, your chest is aching from heartbreak, but rather than cry out loud, you suffer in silence.

I wake up in a cold sweat, I almost never sleep through the night
Since you made your move, I lead a pitiful life
I dream I'm an actor, you know I'm playin' out my role
When I look into the mirror, all I see is a broken soul

Despite all my pain, I'm still proud
So rather than cry out loud
I suffer in silence

I sit around drinkin' cold coffee and suckin' down old, stale beer
Things just ain't been the same, without you here
The lightning strikes my chest, like a dagger through my heart
My daddy always said son, be careful what you start

Despite all my pain, I'm still proud
So rather than cry out loud
I suffer in silence

When I'm alone in my car, I scream out loud
It's more than I can stand
I want to shut off the lights, I want to breathe my last
But that would make me less of a man, so
I suffer in silence

I try to carry on, with my daily routine
When the sun goes down, it's the same old thing
My body is aching, I don't know where to turn
I close the door behind me, as my heart begins to burn

Despite all my pain, I'm still proud
So rather than cry out loud
I suffer in silence

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I'm Gonna Drown Standin' Up

This song was inspired by one of the many after-gig hangs with my good friend, Mark Morrow. It is both truth and metaphor. I was playing in Chicago with Southside Johnny and, after the gig, Mark and I went down the street to a corner bar. It was raining, but while we were inside tippin' it pretty hard, it started to rain so hard, it was insane. We decided to sit tight and have a few more, though we were already drowning in alcohol. I knew the tour bus would be leaving soon so we decide to brave the storm. As we stepped outside it was a torrential downpour and the wind was blowing so hard it was horizontal. It was like something out of a movie, as we leaned into the wind, eyes squinting, trying to find our way back. I've had many nights where I thought I was gonna drown standin' up just from alcohol consumption, but in this case, it was real in an entirely different way. Incidentally, my friend Will Gorin was in town that night, came to the show and had parked his car on the street. He was planning on leaving the next day but his car ended up completely flooded. I think it took him five days to get the car fixed and finally hit the road.

The tears from my heart and whiskey that flows
The pain and the sorrow, maybe only God knows
In over my head, I try and find the light
Won't somebody help me try and make it right
I can't make it right

Chorus

I'm gonna drown standin' up
I'm a man standin' up
I won't never give up
I'm gonna drown standin' up

Pour me another, I feel I'm sinkin' down
The rain is horizontal, I know I'm gonna drown
I stumble on my way, soaked in alcohol
I listen for my name, but nobody calls
Nobody calls at all

Chorus

The light is dim and fading
The water pounds my face
I see my vessel waiting
I must be spinning in place
I wash away the pain, am I goin' insane?
I struggle for every breath
Could this be the face of death?
Could this be the face of death?

Chorus

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Laudie Laudie Lee

I was married to Laura - my now ex-wife, but great friend and mother to my daughter - and when her niece was very young, as in maybe three years old, she couldn't pronounce Laura Lee's name and would always say Laudie Lee. We thought it was pretty funny at the time, but then, in telling the story to my friend down the street, Stan Schwartz, we decided it would be a great title and impetus for a song. We reached into my Kansas country-hick back pocket for some imagery and volia! - a song was born. It was very groovy and funky when we originally recorded back in the day, with Stan playing the meat of the funky groove on piano, which he does so well. I adapted (stole) what I could from Stan's piano groove, moved it over to guitar and let the guitar carry the meat of the groove - so sorry Stan. But since the group is a guitar-driven band, it seemed to make sense to do it that way. John Isley did an incredible arrangement for the horns. I was thrilled to have Stan play on this and I absolutely love the way it came out

Driving in my Chevy, cross the railroad tracks
Gonna see Miss Laudie, I may never come back
She's my inspiration, the one that I adore
Makes me want to press the pedal closer to the floor

Lock me up forever, throw away the key
I'm voluntary victim of Laudie Laudie Lee

Her mama's cookin's awful, and she forces me to eat
But I can clean my plate up, cuz desert is oh so sweet
We get to feelin' groovy and starin' at the moon
And that golden cornfield looks just like a Caribbean dune

Lock me up forever, throw away the key
I'm a voluntary victim of Laudie Laudie Lee

We're custom made for each other just like sugar and tea
I wish I had a dollar for every kiss I got for free
I sure ain't no Rhodes scholar, but I know she's the one for me

Come on pretty Laudie, run away with me
When were short of money, our love is all we'll need
I'll dress you up and pamper you and treat you like a queen
We may have nothing baby, but we've got everything

Lock me up forever, throw away the key
I'm a voluntary victim of Laudie Laudie Lee

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I Can't Change It

Written by Frankie Miller

I first became aware of this song a few years back when someone called me to record it for a movie soundtrack. I just fell in love with the song, and, of course, had already loved Frankie Miller. He was always such a soulful rocker, who just wrote beautiful heartfelt songs. I always wanted to record it for real and here it is, our version.

My friends can't find some things I say
Must be the way I say those things
My friends can't find some things I do
Must be the way I do those things

I can't change it, but I'm tryin' to do it right

I used to steal, I used to fall
Was I wrong? I can't recall
I stole in love, but all in all
Was I wrong? I don't recall

Is it bad to look inside yourself and decide to go?
To someone who can show the way complete
Are you glad to lose the doubts you thought would never go?
When them inside hallucinations had you beat

My own true love has gone away
Can I say, she left that day
The moon still shines a different way
Can I say, she left that day

I can't change it, but I'm waiting patiently



You Set My Soul On Fire

You meet people, things happen, and it makes for good stories, or in this case, a good song. I never know what I'm thinking, and I have certainly given up on having any clue what any person I'm hanging with is thinking. I believe that we truly never know what is going on with another person. We think we do and then pow!!! – you're blindsided and it's not what you thought or expected or maybe wanted or didn't want. I think at this stage of my life, I expect very little, if anything, of anyone and I realize it is quite a job to just keep track of my own crap. People come and go, as do so many things in life. If we truly could learn to be open to anything and attached to nothing, it would be a blessing - easier said than done.

You're soft, sexy and lean
You're cruel and you're mean
You come to me, ya turn me on
Light my fire, then you're gone

You lead me on with stories and lies
You set my soul on fire

You say you love me, then walk away
I can't believe a word you say
You're playin' you're little school girl games
Twist my mind, I never be the same

You're cunning, no good, shallow and jive
You set my soul on fire

I shower you with gifts of music, food and wine
You give me your love, then turn on a dime

You set my soul on fire

Ya broke my heart and tore me down
Finally let go, ya come back around
I see it comin' but I can't stay away
A fool for your love what can I say

I'm addicted to you and my desire
You set my soul on fire

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I Had To Go Thru Hell To Get To Heaven

I got this title from my dear, dear friend Franny, wife of my dear friend Bob Magnuson. Franny went through her share of hell for years. Years of lies, deceit, abuse, but now is very happily married to Bob.

They are loving life and so perfect together. She weathered the storm and made it to higher ground.

Thank you, Franny and Bob. I also expanded on the title and storyline to include my daughter - and, frankly every woman out there who has gone through hell, be it from an abusive relationship, abusive work environment, sexual assault, mental torture or mental disability. All of which leads to 20 kinds of

hell, judgment, rejection, attempted suicide - the list goes on and on. Oria went through more hell than most. Hell that I won't go into, but it was truly absolute hell, instigated and fueled, in some cases, by sick, cruel and mean-spirited people for whom I have not an ounce of respect for. It led to things that most of us could not endure and it broke my heart like I never imagined possible. I learned more, opened-up more and became more compassionate and understanding during this difficult time than possibly any other in my life - and I have gone through some messed up shit. But when it is someone you love, it is way worse than anything you go through yourself. But she hung in there, fought hard, pulled herself up off the floor and is now standing tall. She sang this song from her heart, with true feelings, from experience of wicked times and she absolutely killed it. Great Job Oria!!! So beautiful!!!

Oria sang this song exactly as I heard it. Actually, even better.

You put me down hard, treat me mean and cruel
I might seem sweet and nice, but don't think I'm your fool
I had to walk through fire and kick down the door
Pick my ravaged, beaten body up off the floor
Dig deep, scrape and claw, crank it to eleven
I had to go thru hell, to get to heaven

Had no passion, no desire, I'd lost my will to live
Stripped of my dignity, I had nothing left to give
Felt lost and ashamed, with no hope in sight
Struggling to make sense of it, nothin' could make it right
Would I live another day, maybe five, six or seven?
I had to go thru hell, to get to heaven

I crawled up from the ashes and wiped away my tears
I've been down so low I have no fear
I'm open to love, you see me standin' here
But I had to go thru hell
I had to go thru hell

You know I had to go thru hell, to get to heaven

Now I'm standin' tall, I finally see the light
So many dark hours, but I never gave up the fight
Hangin' by a thread, I made it to higher ground
I feel so blessed, love is all around
Ain't no lookin' back I'm rockin' 24/7
I had to go thru hell

I had to go thru hell
I had to go thru hell
Yeah, I had to go thru hell, to get to heaven

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Hind Tit Blues

Well, this a silly song about a term I heard all the time when I was growin' up in Maize, Kansas. It was a legitimate term on the farm and elsewhere that referred to the runt of the litter, the weakest one of the bunch – the one who would get pushed back to hind teat and not get as much nourishment and not develop as well. Of course, it was a metaphor we applied to ourselves or anyone else who was not giving it their all. If their work or performance was subpar, they were falling behind in chores, a race, sports, music - anything really- simply put, they were suckin' hind tit.

Oh baby, you think you got bad
You can't lose what you never had
Stand there grooving in your patent leather shoes
It's hard payin' those white boys' dues
You can scream, you can bitch and you can throw a fit
You're still suckin' hind tit

Here comes your baby, butt draggin' in the sand
Man, you got to enlighten me cuz I don't understand
What you see in that big ole beer belly girl
One man's pebble is another man's pearl
You can scream you can bitch and you can throw a fit
You're still suckin' hind tit

She'll lead you on and tell you that you're cool
Kick you to the curb, make you a fool
Tease you in love with sexy, silly games
Next week she won't even know your name
You thought you had it goin' on, thought you were slick
Brother let me tell ya, you're suckin' hind tit

You know my life is not my own
That's why every night I get totally stoned
'Bout time I woke up and got off my ass
Swimmin' on my back fallin' down mighty fast
I can scream, I can bitch and I can throw a fit
Baby, I'll still be suckin' hind tit

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Born Under a Bad Sign

By Booker T. Jones / William Bell

I have always loved Albert King's recording of this song and it clearly is the definitive version. I have played it for years and many guitarists have recorded it. Somewhere along the way, I discovered that William Bell and Booker T. Jones wrote it, as, sadly, I had never really paid attention to that detail. A few years ago, I was performing at the legendary Apollo Theater with Southside Johnny, on a tribute to Billie Holiday concert, and, low and behold, William Bell was also on the bill. It was such a great thrill to meet him, hang out, and we talked about that song, which he wrote back in 1967. He was a beautiful cat and I hope we did his legendary song justice. We tried to keep the integrity of Albert King's classic version but make it our own.

Born under a bad sign
I been down since I been able to crawl
If it wasn't for bad luck
I wouldn't have no luck at all

Hard luck and trouble, my only friends
Been on my own, ever since I was ten

Born under a bad sign
I been down since I been able to crawl
If it wasn't for bad luck
I wouldn't have no luck at all

I can't read, I can hardly write
My whole life has been one big fight

Born under a bad sign
I been down since I been able to crawl
If it wasn't for bad luck
I wouldn't have no luck at all

Wine and women, that's all I crave
Big legged woman gonna carry me to my grave

Born under a bad sign
I been down since I been able to crawl
If it wasn't for bad luck
I wouldn't have no luck at all

My Brother

I wrote this about and for both of my brothers. We grew up pretty much in the middle of nowhere - in wide-open country and we would go hiking, hunting and camping all over the land and up on the big Arkansas River. So beautiful. We shared so much together and are bonded for life, of course. I don't think back then we thought we would ever leave, but somehow we all did leave and are now separated by many miles. My brother Lee lives in California and Greg lives in Arkansas. We don't get to spend as much time together as we would like but we will always be brothers to the end.

There's a place where the river runs strong
The grass grows tall and the days they seem so long
The winter's cold is ripping at your face
Just gotta keep searching till you find your place

Standing in the snow, fire paints the field
Got frostbite fingers, frozen to the steel
This is my friend, the art of the chase
Who'd ever believe we'd leave this open space

My brother can you hear me now
Our callings were different, we've drifted somehow
Running like the wind, we're changing like the clouds

The road is long like an old dusty trail
Gotta sidestep trouble like you're dancing through hell
You know what they say, no pain no gain
Sometimes I feel like I'm going insane

You've got your scene, and I've got mine
Will we change our course or will we run out of time?
Would you hear the sound if I called out your name?
Are we prisoners on a runaway train?

My brother, can you see me now
Our visions are different, but the same somehow
Running like the wind, like we're busting out

Hey, where ya going where you been and have you seen my friend?
You know I'd go there just to see you again
You can't look back that would be a sin

Life is short, you try to get what you need
Can't take it all with you, so you leave some for seed
I've heard the phrase, blood is thicker than water
Got to make time for your brothers, sisters, sons and daughters

My brother, can you hear me now
Our lives are different, but we're closer somehow
Running like the wind, for life I'm your friend

My Home Town

We all have our own home town, well most of us do, and we carry memories and values with us, no matter where our travels take us. I grew up in a tiny little farm community, the aforementioned Maize, Kansas. Times were pretty simple then: no internet, no connection to the world, three channels on the TV and no money, but we generally had a good time. The skies in Kansas are as big and as blue as anywhere you will go and yes, the wheat fields stretch out like oceans of gold. And my Lord, show me any place where the rainbows and sunsets are more beautiful. Back then, it was simple people and simple times. I always love going back home where the folks are so fine. In September 2017, the Mayor of Maize – my good friend, the late Clair Donnelly - brought Glenn Alexander & Shadowland back home to perform. I was so honored to be there with family and friends and to be able to debut “My Home Town.” Rest in peace, dear Clair, and thank you for making those dreams come true.

Skynyrd sang about their skies so blue
There's no place they're blue or bigger than here, it's true
Wheat fields stretch out like oceans of gold
Beautiful rainbows and sunsets unfold

Growin' up here it was free and easy
Not a care in the world, fresh air to breathe
Skippin' down a dirt road kickin' stones
Holdin' hands, I'll walk you all the way home

I'm talkin' bout my home town, where the folks are so fine
I'm talkin' bout my home town, we always have a good time
I'm talkin' bout my home town, we ain't got nothing to prove
I'm talkin' bout my home town, I can't wait to get back
Lord I'm comin' home to you

Family and friends are what matter the most
Not the money you make, position or post
A farmer, bricklayer or a movie star
It's not what you do but who you are

The good folks here live honestly
A look in their eye, a handshake carries integrity
They're kind, helpful and full of love
Threaten their way of life, you better pray to God above

I'm talkin' bout my home town, where the folks are so fine
I'm talkin' bout my home town, we always have a good time
I'm talkin' bout my home town, we ain't got nothing to prove
I'm talkin' bout my home, I can't wait to get back
Lord I'm comin' home to you

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I'm The Only One

My friend, the super-talented Mike Rossi, shot me this title. He will be disappointed in me, as he had laid out an entire concept album, with a variation on this being the title of the album and the title track. I was inspired and wrote the song. The concept for the album kind of fell off, but I guess but the song remained. I originally wasn't going to put it on this album. We had already recorded 10 songs, but something was telling me I needed to include "Born under a Bad Sign" and this little gem. It really is about this period in my life I guess. It is about assessing and reflecting. I hope you enjoy it and can relate.

I walk alone down this lonely road
Some call me a sinner, some call me a saint
Doesn't really much matter, I can't change what I am
I'm just the same old song with a fresh coat of paint

The road is long with no rest in sight
I keep on swingin' but I believe I'm losin' the fight
With every step I have more questions than answers
Like the castles made of sand and the neon purple dancers

It's my road to walk and I'm the only one
Ain't nobody to lean on, sometimes it's a lonely one
Though there those round you makin' noise and chatter
Talk is cheap when it comes time, time to climb the ladder

I'm the only one, oh the only one
I'm the only one, the lonely only one

I try to stand tall and weather out the storm
Hold onto my spirit and let go of my form
Familiar folks and values vanish from the world I've known
As everything falls away, I feel so all alone

Gonna keep jukin' and jivin', don't know what else to do
I stare into empty space feelin' broke down and blue
I miss you so much, but I don't even know your name
Choices that I've made, I got no one else to blame

I'm the only one, oh the only one
I'm the only one, the lonely only one

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