

Tellico
Relics and Roses
Song Lyrics and Notes

1. Backstep Blues-by Anya Hinkle

Notes: Seems like after awhile, men sometimes get up and leave. Seems like I've seen it around me a lot recently. And they leave little by little, imperceptibly retreating ("hey, where did your daddy go wrong?"), until one day they actually just makes themselves physically absent. It leaves a woman that is not young, with a whole life of raising kids behind her, at an interesting juncture, the Backstep Blues. The song, Backstep Blues, actually has a "backstep" in it, a rhythmic hiccup that is typical of old time music, and that idea is emphasized with the use of Jed's banjo and my fiddle played in the old time style in this tune. In fact, this tune started as an instrumental fiddle tune. But it combines that old-time flavor with Aaron's signature dobro sounds that make it uniquely Tellico. Jon Stickley holds down rhythm guitar in this tune, and helped with the arrangement as well, which we worked up for the first time for the album.

Hey babe so your luck ran out, ran on outta here sayin
Don't look good but you're gonna see cant get a man a do what you
please Oh you know how it's gotta be so but can't you see oh how it's a-killin
me
Sayin hey where did your daddy go wrong
Sayin hey, hey hey
Sayin hey where did your daddy go wrong

Hey babe he's the fortunate son, a-easy go and a-easy
Come on a down the back road, when you turn around he's headed for the
door hey turn the lock and a let him go on to pick the bone of a lonely
soul
Sayin hey where did your daddy go wrong
Sayin hey, hey hey
Sayin hey where did your daddy go wrong

Hey where did your babies go well they left and don't need their mama k(no)w
More than what you wanna know that you're nothing more than the dust that
blows hey you'd better box up all them baby shoes 'n hey you done got the
backstep
blues
Sayin hey where did your daddy go wrong
Sayin hey, hey hey
Sayin hey where did your daddy go wrong

2. Calamity-Stig Stiglets

Notes: A tale of disaster sparked by a combination of Hurricane Katrina and the Japan's Tsunami...I remember watching the news and an interview with a survivor, who stood in the middle of total destruction telling how the floodwaters from Katrina literally ripped his wife from his hands...the part about 'climbed to rooftops and hills' was more inspired by the footage of the Tsunami that we watched unfold, images taken from rooftops as things that weren't supposed to ever move like houses and trees, floated by...

When the sun rose that day in the town
The western winds blew through they never breathed a sound
From the west then approached the blackened clouds
Brang the darkness just like a hangman's shroud
The skies did rumble the ships were tossed around
The waves came in and they took the harbor down
I grabbed my momma we ran for higher ground
The rain and hail they came to beat us down

Was black as midnight so vivid I recall
I thought I'd never see the sun again
From the sea then there came a waterwall
Good friends I know they were in their homes within
The seas did come and they did fill the town
We climbed to rooftops and hills that did surround
I took my momma we run for higher ground
My friends they never ever would be found

We reached the foothills a crowd had gathered there
Struggled ever to defeat the storm
Flashin lightning and rain and hail above
Showed no mercy to youth or aged forms
Seas did come and they did fill the land
The tempest hit the wood and steel and tested both
It took my momma out of my strong hands
Her face I'd never ever see again
And the wind blows cold, the wind blows cold

3. You Can't Go Home Again-Anya Hinkle

Notes: I picked up Thomas Wolfe's "You can't go home again" last summer, mostly because he was a local author and I love reading about regional history. After struggling through the first half of "Look Homeward Angel" I wasn't sure about "You can't go home again," but found it to be so richly descriptive in Wolfe's longwinded style, with epic development of universal themes that resonate with all of us. I was especially taken with the part where the protagonist DOES go home again, which reminded me of something that

my own father always used to like to say: “you can’t go home again.” Of course you can’t. The comforting idea of home is just that, an idea. You have to face yourself and your life. Running from it, either to home or far away from it, doesn’t alleviate your suffering.

Boys there’s nothing as exciting as the whistle of a train
Tellin of all the places it knows but you’ve never seen
But back then all you needed was a tank of gasoline
Your dreams were as wide as a Ford and as fine as a Fairlane

But you can’t go home again
I don’t want to believe but I believe I’ll know it
It’s dark ‘cept the streetlights shining ‘fore the roosters crowin’
No you can’t go home again
You’re better off thinkin’ of home when you’re goin’
‘Cause when you get there, that old lonesome wind starts blowin’

Well just like my mamma I just wanted to dream
But now its just like daddy always said it would be
That it’s too late to put the bees back in the hive and the baby back to sleep
You’ve come and gone again, you’ve come too far to go back now you see

No you can’t go home again
I don’t want to believe but I believe i’m learnin’
It’s cold outside think I’ll just lay here and keep dreamin’
No you can’t go home again
You’re better off thinkin’ of home when you’re goin’
‘Cause when you get there, that old lonesome wind starts blowin’

All them places you seen are now just pictures in the stair
Their colors fading like a flame running out of air

But you can’t go home again
I don’t want to believe but I believe I know it
I’m movin’ on but it’s on ahead I’m goin’
No you can’t go home again
You’re better off thinkin’ of home when you’re goin’
‘Cause when you get there, that old lonesome wind starts blowin’

4. I Want To Know-Stig Stiglets

Notes: A song concerning what happens to the body of the ones we love, and how ultimately, it doesnt matter.... Jon plays drums and Aaron is on lap steel on this.

I wanna know now, I wanna know now
I wanna know now, where it is, where it is my true love lies tonight

Not in the cold ground, not in the cold ground
Not in the cold ground, nor in the mournful sound, nor with the dust that blows this
ol world around

Not on the mountainside, not on the mountainside
Not in the mountainside, nor in the canyons wide, nor with the snows that cloak the
peaks on high

Not in the wild seas, not in the wild seas
Not in the wild seas, nor in the tall tall trees, nor the shadows that rest beneath their
canopy

Not in the blue sky, not in the blue sky
Not in the blue sky, nor in the sullen clouds that every single evening seem to come
around

Not in the full moon, not in the full moon
Not in the blue moon, the light that leaves too soon, that likes to hide from my clear
view

I want to know where I might find that old girl that's on my mind
More like whisky than like wine, that bitter train's comin' right on time

Not in the sunlight, not in the sun's light
Not in the sun's light, that always shines so bright as to burn me blind when I look
upon

But in the star sky, only in the star sky
But in the star sky, that's where my true love lies, and I sleep beneath those stars
each and every night

5. Ever What They Say--Anya Hinkle

Notes: This refrain of this song was originally “that’s what they say,” adapted from the old time tune “say darlin’ say” which was playing on WNCW as I was driving back from the Grey Eagle one night, maybe you can still hear a little “say darlin’ say” in this melody, I don’t know. I’ve gotten so much inspiration over the years from listening to WNCW, what a great station. I also had some help with some of the poetry and arrangement of this song, both from “Hippie” Jack Stoddart of the Jammin’ at Hippie Jack’s Americana Festival and from our dobro player, and poet, Aaron Ballance, who shared some creative ideas that helped shape the final version of this song.

Well I never wanted to leave them hills
But dust is bread and rust is steel
Got to go if you can't set still
'Fore the lights were on and the plumbing was in
'Fore the radio and the bathtub gin
Folks slept easier back then
Ever what they say, oh ever what they say

Like the company left when the timber's done
He packed his bag and took his gun
Headed west to Washington
But a man ain't no good anyhow
They'll lay you down and wear you out
Hollerin' and fightin' and runnin' around
Ever what they say, oh ever what they say

Course a mama loves her baby child
Never kept me from running wild
Until I saw my own girl smile
Now they got her down in the ground below
I needed peace is how I know
Peace is love only a little slow
Ever what they say, oh ever what they say

Well my shadow comes to haunt me dear
In the darkness it will still appear
Just wait for dawn and hide your tears
Cause folks like us don't feel no pain
All them days look just the same
Without the wind and storms and rain
Ever what they say, oh ever what they say

6. Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues-Stig Stiglets

Notes: I'm not sure I understand every line of this...but the jist of it is a man who is busking on the corner, in Asheville, trying to find a niche and a fanbase by including something iconic and familiar to them in his songwriting to try and get them to listen or buy a record, only for the consumer to miss the obscure reference due to the generation gap...

I'm gonna stay right here all day if I can
Lookin for the woman ain't got no man
Goin' shell out a dollar if I should lose
The Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

Say it's a sorrow say it's a shame

But I'm standin' here telling my name
Talk to any woman that I choose
About these Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

It's 5am before the sun come up
Gone 45 miles fore I seen a drop
You can't paint a house in the rain it's true
Without these Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

So I start to tremble and start to shake my wallet is
Just flat as a pancake bossman
Find me work inside to do
Without these Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

I need a smoke and a drink and a dollar or two
I got to get to my car before them old metermaids do
The think I got more money than I can use
I got them Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

Well come see me I got's a plan
Gonna be a rich man, hot diggity damn
I find lawyers with fancy shoes
Sell them the Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

But the joke's on me, it's before their time
They're singin it's the end of the world as we know it but I feel fine
Now what am I gonna do
With these Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

I need a smoke and a drink and a dollar or two
I got to get to my car before them old metermaids do
The think I got more money than I can use
I got them Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

So come see when you get's the time
And you can meet these buddies of mine
With friends like these who needs to lose
The Hawkeye Pierce and Honeycutt Blues

7. Forsaken Winds-Anya Hinkle

Notes: this song is pure poetry and doesn't exactly have a story, but overall, describes our inability, or unwillingness, to connect, and our inevitable loneliness in the way we experience life. Aaron adds some ethereal pedal steel on this tune.

Riding high riding high on the forsaken winds
Just tryin' to get back standing here holding two damn dimes in my hand
It's all wrong man I'm on the double nickel highway headed south to New Orleans
Riding high riding high on the forsaken winds

I don't know what it was I just woke up and didn't want to see you again
You said you'd had a dream and I said I needed a little time on my hands
And anyway I don't like to hear about the dreams people have
Riding high riding high on the forsaken winds

Don't get old he said I'd rather die than see another springtime again
Too old to mount my horse without a fence, too old to carry water to him
Don't get me wrong, I'd never want to live all them old days again
Riding high riding high on the forsaken winds

I'll try to stop by if I can I keep meaning to tell you how much I care
I think I see you there while I'm flyin' in a 747 jet plane in the air
It's not that I'm too high it's just faster than I thought when I'm up there
Riding high riding high on the forsaken winds

I just wanna to sing but I don't want no harmony man
I just need a little elbow room
Wouldn't hold me down it would just kind of fence me in
Riding high riding high on the forsaken winds

8. Mexico 1995-Anya Hinkle

Notes: This is a part of a coming of age story after an extended four month journey, mostly by bus and mostly by myself, from Nogales, Arizona through Guatemala and back. It was before the internet, before cell phones, and after a grisly war and genocide happening in southern Mexico and Guatemala, a real eye opener for a kid, and of course, the winter after Jerry Garcia died. That early morning that I walked back, on foot, into my post-college privileged American life after crossing the border at Nogales was like a dream, I was a ghost in my own shoes, my idea of who I was porous like the haze that seemed to linger that entire day that I re-emerged. The title of this song that we always use on the set list is "Icon," because it samples from iconic songs that set up this general idea that it's all been done before. Where does a kid go with that? What's ahead that's worth anything? This tune includes Jon Stickley on drums and Aaron on lap steel.

When morning came, I could finally see the border
A stranger in both lands come through the night
Never turned around, just walked right over
Heavy haze ahead for taking flight

It was right around the day that Jerry died
Was the day it seemed my life had just begun
Way on past the day that music died
While the greatest generation came unspun

Gasoline cost a dollar and quarter
When I tipped back my first legal beer
Filled up the truck that daddy paid for
And headed north away from the frontier

Hadn't seen it yet from both sides now
Hadn't even seen it from just one
Even yesterday when troubles seemed so far away
I never even had that kind of fun

It was something of a butterfly migration
And something like a moth drawn to a flame
Getting there is no exact location
And the rambling path has unconvincing aim

Left that little girl with puff the magic dragon
Childish dreams tied to the whipping post
Ain't much left for all the people to imagine
Am I a messenger, a gypsy or a ghost

9. Morning Haze-Stig Stiglets

Notes: A little country ballad about the end of things in a relationship...knowing what the other person is going to say before they say it, and being the absolute last person in the universe that can do anything about it...

There's things I can't un-say
Both known and unknown
Been shown the door, no matter what for,
It doesn't matter anyway

There's things I can't undo
Crazy but true
You make your own easel, you paint your own picture
Hang it in the living room for everyone to see

We all find out the road is too long, too strong in it's will
The morning light's haze that we look upon
It's glare is short-lived, just sit for a spell
You're only half as strong as you'd like to think

Too proud to break tears, after years a relief
But deep run the scars, we see them quite plain
In the morning haze

We see things two different ways
We're both wonderin' what to do
You say things are rough, you say you ain't tough enough
You say that you're done and through

If you don't want to talk no more
there's really nothin' that say
It just seems a shame to waste this whole thing

We all find out the road is too long, too strong in it's will
The morning light's haze that we look upon
It's glare is short-lived, just sit for a spell
You're only half as strong as you'd like to think
Too proud to break tears, after years a relief
But deep run the scars, we see them quite plain
In the morning haze

10. Lean Into It-Stig Stiglets

Notes: A little raggy blues romp about sticky doors and the people that you want to use them...just lean into it and...get on out!

Well you left me for that low-down dirty trash you call a man and I call mister
Headed south, lean into it,
That door sticks sometimes don't let it stop you from saying bye-bye
You used to bake me cakes and apple pies
But now you feed me leftovers, tell me your dirty damn lies
Lean into it, it's unlocked stop turning the bolt you used to lock it just fine

With me on the other side you used to run right round and hide with that two time
low lying fool with whom I just can't abide

Lean into it

Take all of your things stop you're screamin and sniffin and cryin

Lean into it

If you don't know how give me a map and I'm gonna draw you a line

Don't you come knockin on my door I don't want to see you anymore
I used to be a nervous wreck but now I'm doing just fine

Lean into it

Get your car out my driveway I'm sayin for the very last time

Lean into it

Let me get that door for you cause I don't think that you're really trying

Just get on that lonesome train or maybe that big aero-plane
I just want you gone I don't care if it is snow hell or rain
Don't act big and all
Your good size so big and tall you've probably got enough ass to knock down that
whole damn wall
Don't you mistake me for a man who cares
I don't love you no more woman, I ain't puttin me on no airs
Lean into it

11. White Line/River of Pride-Neil Young

Notes: This song is actually a medley of two somewhat obscure Neil Young tunes from the 70s with different words but essentially the same melody: White Line (Ragged Glory) and River of Pride (Chrome Dreams). Stig changed up the dirty Crazy Horse rock sound to an uptempo acoustic bluegrass version of these two great Neil tunes and I combined the lyrics. Jon Stickley joins Jed and Aaron for some cameo shredding at the very end.

I came to you when I needed rest
You took my love and put it to the test
I saw some things that I never would have guessed
Feels like a railroad, I pulled a whole load behind

And I'm rollin down the open road
Where my true love lies awaitin'
Right now I'm thinking 'bout those things I know
But the daylight will soon be breakin'

I was adrift on a river of pride
It seemed like such a long and easy ride
You were my raft but I let you slide
I've been down but I'm coming back up again

That old white line is a friend of mine
And it's a good time we've been makin'
Right now I'm thinking 'bout those things I know
But the daylight will soon be breakin'