

I Made It Just For You –Bob Gramann All Songs © 2019 by R.A. Gramann

1. I Made It Just for

Picked out the finest wood.
Split it and planed it,
Turned it in the sunlight
To find the best grains.
Glued it and carved it
Polished so hard it
Would shine through the darkness
With the love it contains.
I made it just for you.
I drew up the outline
Captured some starshine
So you could step lightly
Wherever you go.
I made it just for you.

Opened that wooden box.
Put in a blue crystal
I knew you would smile when
You held it in the light.
Then, Seeds of carnations
the dirt that they grow in
You'll have pink flowers
When the spring shines so bright.

Intangibles coming next:
The sound of a 9th chord
A theme we might explore
Or a momentary now.
A shade like a warm glow
Or blue like your eyes know
I'll ask you a question
I hope you won't say "No."

A pact between you and me.
The bubble around us
Becomes a safe harbor
Where none may intrude.
Where hard work or travel
Our pact won't unravel
A gift of the power
Love daily renewed.

2. We Don't Talk about That That

I once met a woman all beauty and grace.
A hint of her history -- the lines on her face.
I could tell from her voice, she wasn't born near.
So I asked her "From where and how'd you get here?"
She turned away quick, voice raspy and gruff
You've got a lot of nerve to ask me that stuff
Be off with you, I think I've had enough,
cause we don't talk about that.
We don't talk about that.
We don't talk about that.
What can't be forgiven
Still haunts the livin'
We don't talk about that.

Old man, a veteran of World War II.
I asked "in the war, what things did you do?
Did you shoot any Germans? Did you kill some dead?
Was it like it said in the books I've read?
What about your buddies? Did they make it through?
Tell us some stories 'bout what happened to you."
He said, " I'm not proud of what I had to do."
We don't talk about that.

There's a statue called "freedom" on the Capitol dome.
Since the time of Lincoln, that's been it's home.
We're proud of our country but the irony
It was cast by a slave named Phillip Reid.
Who dug the footings and laid the foundation?
Who cut the stone for the pride of our nation?
The laborers, carpenters, masons, and painters?
We don't talk about that.

Can you keep it a secret? Can you hide your shame?
Are you guilty if no one knows your name?
It's over now, all in the past.
The memories fade, maybe they won't last.
Are some things better left unsaid
Till all of the doers and victims are dead?
Might be a discussion we ought to have
But we don't talk about that

3. We Don't Do That Anymore

A cooper has to know
How to make barrels out of trees
How to shape thirty-six staves
Hoop them tight so they won't leak.
He knows about knots and runout
And how to cut the croze
And where to drill the bung hole
'Cause you gotta have one of those.
But, We don't do that anymore
We've found a better way.
Relax and put your feet up
You don't need to work today.
We don't do that anymore.
How'd you learn that, anyway?
We thank you for your time here
And hope you'll be okay.
But, we don't do that anymore.

A railroad fireman has to know
Elevations up ahead
How to make steam when it's needed
When to curb the fire instead
He scoops coal into the firebox
And reads the boiler dials
Someday he'll be the engineer
Pulling iron along the miles.
There's romance in the old ways
Satisfaction in your hands
The dirt stays piled,
The wood stays nailed
What's built forever stands.
Used to be firemen on the railroads
Operators on the phone
Coopers near the vineyards
And bankers making loans.

I yearned for this since childhood.
Learned to work hard from my dad.
Went to school, bought the tools
It's the only skill I have.
You might call it a vacation.
A week or two'd be okay.
But what'll I do in a week or two
With no job and no more pay?
A programmer had to know
How bits pack into bytes,
And which end is the big end,

How to make your loops finite.
How to code a punch card,
And how to code a jump.
How to get it done by Friday,
And how to read that dump.
A folksinger has to know...

4. Cypress Canoe

All along the Potomac, there's cypress trees now.
They're hard to cut, but I figured out how.
Cypress won't rot and cypress is light
Cypress is strong, for canoes it's just right.
So, one of those months I had nothing to do
I built me a cypress woodstrip canoe.

My folks lived in Old Town when I was a kid.
Cycling past tourists, that's what I did.
At the end of King Street, there was a palace for art.
Watching the buskers there gave me my start
I still like to visit those places I knew
So I paddle around in my cypress canoe.

For Hurricane Sandy when I was just nine
We sandbagged the house and it worked out just fine.
The bags kept the water from pouring right in.
We waited two days, it was dry again.
But now, with the river just flowing right through,
The only way home is my cypress canoe.

I took my grandson to see my old home
Where down by the docks as a child I did roam.
He thought it was fun as we paddled along
Though most of the houses and buildings were gone.
My old home was boarded, not much we can do
We slid past the house in the cypress canoe.
They say when you grow up, you can never go back.
The neighborhood changes, old foundations crack.
Folks that you knew they die or move away
But I never expected what I see today.
Half of a city awash in the tides
When I think of what happened it tears my insides.
We could have been smarter, we could have planned
But the world caught a fever, infected by man.

Now, I live on an island that once was a hill,
Down by the old airport, they're building on fill.
I love the Potomac, in the water I play,
But I worry a gator might get me some day.
But 'til then I'll remember the home of my youth
As I paddle around in my cypress canoe.

5. Granddad Planted Trees

Raking leaves they rustle,
They crackle and they crunch
All this color, a cool grey sky,
I'll get 'em piled by lunch.
I love these trees like life itself
They're living histories.
They remind me of my grandad
Cause Grandad planted trees
You could say it with flowers.
You could shout it from the rooftops
Or you could beg from your knees.
You could say "I'm sorry."
Or "Darling, I love you."
Granddad planted trees.

Grandad came when the town was new.

The square was flat and clear.
In his vision, he saw shade.
He planted this poplar here.
Over there he planted an oak
When he married my Grandma
And he grew the maple in his front yard
The one I climbed upon.

When you plant trees
It's not for tomorrow.
No shade tomorrow
From them itty bitty seeds.
It's your children's children
Who'll look up and feel the wonder.
It's like loving some person
You might never chance to meet.

Beavers, saws, nor windstorms
None can take a forest down.
Even when a fire burns through
New sprouts come from the ground.
When the future seems the bleakest
When there's no hope you can see,
That's when it's most important
To plant a few more trees.
Please grab your gloves and join me
It's time to plant some trees.

6. We're Gonna Need the Banjo

Shackleton's crew at the bottom of the world
Their boat crushed by the floes.
400 miles to safety
Pack light we've far to go.
The Bible, books, and golden watch
Thrown into the snow.
But we're gonna need the banjo
To chase away the woe.
Nothing's finer, don't tell Dinah,
Fly's in the buttermilk, don't you cry.
But we're gonna need the banjo
Which nobody can deny.

The Buick slid across the road
It's sinking in the lake.
Climbing out the window
There's one thing I must take.
While others swam to safety
I had to swim back in
We're gonna need that banjo
Let's sing it once again.

The pipes they burst, the floor fell in
When the tree took down the house.
Crawling through the timbers
We barely made it out.
Huddled in the rainstorm
All safe on the lawn
Gonna need the banjo
Now the house is gone.

The consequence of politics
All we love is doomed
No one wants to talk anymore
'Bout the elephant in the room.
We've been through hard times before
I'm sure we'll make it through.
That we're gonna need the banjo
Might be the only thing that's true.

What Shackleton knew,
it saved his crew
They walked out on the ice.

He knew they'd need that banjo.
That banjo saved their lives.
Lying on my deathbed
No riches will I take.
Can't even take the banjo,
They'll play it at my wake.

7. You Could Have Loved Me

Over, under, beside, and with
You rebuked my prepositions.
Me there beside you, that would be bliss,
But that ain't my position.

You could have smiled the moment that I walked in.
You could have said "So happy to see you again."
You could have suggested some romance and maybe some sin,
You could have loved me,
But you didn't.

You could have run to kiss me on the cheek
Or said words that'd keep me happy for a week.
You could have lifted your skirt in a fit of pique.
You could have loved me
But you didn't

All my overtures, you've just ignored
I'd write you a symphony, but you'd just act bored.
It does nothing for you to feel adored
I know I loved you....

You could have baked me a steaming apple pie
You'd be my lady, I'd be your guy
I tried pretending, it seemed like a lie.
You could have loved me
But you didn't
Over, under, around, and through
You rebuked my prepositions.
What could I say? What could I do
To improve your disposition?

You could have said my home is where you wanted to be
You could have consented to marry me
You could have had my babies, or at least, two or three
You could have loved me
But you didn't

All my overtures, you've just dismissed.
All my longing to see you, I'll have to resist
If I didn't love you so much, I'd really be ...
Well, you know I loved you...
I gave it my best shot, but my shot missed the mark.
I know forever we'll be apart.
You walked out of my song, you walked off with my heart
But, you could have loved me...
You know I loved you

8. Angel of Entropy

Horses sleep on their hooves at night
Babies have to lay down
Raccoons sleep after morning light
Babies have to lay down
Hoot owls sleep in hollow trees
Babies have to lay down
A humming hive holds the sleeping bees
Babies have to lay down tonight.

*As sure as darkness makes it possible
For morning to bring dawn,
As sure as dawn brings squirrels
And robins hunting on the lawn.
As sure as moonlight drops the dew on every
leaf and every blade,
Be sure that sleep will bring you happy dreams
And another happy day.*

A gorilla sleeps wherever he wants
Babies have to lay down.
Ducklings sleep in icy ponds.
Babies have to lay down.
Crows and turkeys roost in trees
Babies have to lay down.
Sea otters sleep in floating weeds.
Babies have to lay down tonight.

*Angel of entropy
Surrender to the night.
May visions of block towers
Fill your dreams with pure delight.
Sleep until the sunrise
Or sleep until the noon
Just sleep until tomorrow
Please go to sleep real soon.*

Possums sleep in a hollow log
Babies have to lay down
Fleas they sleep in the hair of the dog
Babies have to lay down
Elephants sleep standing on their legs.
Babies have to lay down.
Hens they sleep upon their eggs.
Babies have to lay down tonight.

Your parents sleep in the other room
Babies have to lay down.
Clowns they sleep in their clown costumes
Babies have to lay down.
Naomi sleeps in her little bed
Babies have to lay down
So close your eyes and rest your head
Babies have to lay down tonight.
So close your eyes and rest your head
Babies have to lay down tonight.

9. You Mother Knows

Your mother knows
'Bout blankets, boobs, and diapers
Your mother knows
About cries all through the night.
Your mother knows
Why the sun comes up each morning
She knows what's wrong
And how to make it right.
There's really lots of things your mother knows
But mostly she just holds her baby close.

Your mother knows
What can wait until tomorrow
Your mother knows
Just what you need today.

Your mother knows
Why worries just don't matter
She knows what to do
And just what she has to say.
There's really lots of things your mother knows
But mostly she just holds her baby close.

Your mother knows
Lots of secrets 'bout your daddy
Your mother knows
Lots of things you'll want to do.
Your mother knows
Why parents love their children
She knows why your dad
Will give anything to you.
There's really lots of things your mother knows
But mostly she just holds her baby close.

Your mother knows
About geese and birds and lizards.
Your mother knows
Where ducklings swim and play
Your mother knows
Why play is work for babies
She'll show you bugs
And read to you each day
There's really lots of things your mother knows
But mostly she just holds her baby close.

10. Cook Up a Trout

*Skillet on the camp stove
Onions and butter.
Gonna' cook up a trout
Gonna cook up another.
Only one thing
I like better in this world.
And that's rollin' in the tent
With my red-headed girl.*

Running down the mountain
On rocky knees
Panther Creek's cool water
Shaded by the trees.
Gotta have cool water
If you wanna have trout
And build a covered pond to
Keep the kingfishers out.

Well, I'm no ichthyologist
But I can tell you this:
The truth about trout fishin's
There's no romance for the fish.
Hook through the lip
That barb's gotta hurt
Wishing for the water
But he's flopping in the dirt.

You can buy 'em by the pound or
Catch 'em by the fish.
Sauté 'em with onions.
Don't get better than this.
When I get to heaven
Hope they don't throw me out
Cause all of my life
I've been worshipping trout.
Great trout almighty
Gotta thank the trout.

11. Art 203

Senior year, last exam, Art 203
Essays to explain each painting's fit in history
"Orange, Red, Yellow" Rothko's rectangles on the screen.
This one speaks to me like none I've ever seen.
Yellow screams with lust and longing, Father Red is in the way,
Orange exclaims he'd die for love, her father he will slay.
Rothko shows how tragedy foments connubial bliss.
Furiously I write it down, I'll get an A for this.
*It's a masterpiece evoking life's deepest themes
The artist's colors illustrate our inner thoughts and dreams
Approach the canvas slowly, the details you can see
Show that everything's exactly as you thought it ought to be.*

Next up's Jackson Pollock's "Convergence" to expound.
Splashes, smears of color, paint lines swirling all around.
Entangled limbs of lovers, textures groping naked skin
Long affairs and one-night stands, panting, lurid grins.
Drawings of relationships tried by girls and guys.
Lips impressed, partners distressed by passion's roving eyes.
Orgies in the marketplace, pleasures of the flesh
All the things that people do in pursuit of happiness.

Now, Grant Wood's "American Gothic" the last one to explain.
Sad girl, stern guy with pitchfork. What makes them feel such pain?
Every picture tells a story. This one does that, too.
"Oh, Hiram, what is that noise?" "Oh, Norah, I love you."
"Quick, Hiram, put on your clothes, there's a knocking at the door."
"Drat, it's that darned artist, get your undies off the floor."
"Oh, Hiram, why'd he come now? I can't wait until he's gone."
"Me neither, Norah, hurry, get your shoes back on."
If I get an A on this one, I'll have aced them all.

I ran next day to see my grade, prof stopped me in the hall.
Your test is the worst I ever seen, You seem quite obsessed.
"It seems that all you ever think about is sex, sex, sex."
"Not me!" I said. "I carefully write just what I see.
Your the one who picked the pictures! You've got the fixation, not me!"
The moral of this story is not too hard to find
Each of your perceptions is colored by your mind.
You know not only painters are practitioners of this art.
Folksingers, salesmen, sculptors, we all do our part.
Politicians, poets, con-men, all leave gaps you must fill in.
If you think you understand it, then it's time to think again.

12. DJO 50th Reunion Song

Half a century since we last met
Wow! Life happened fast.
How great to get back together
And catch up on our past.
Stories, scores, curiosity,
Pride, longings, we brought it all.
After studying up on the yearbook
To boost our faint recall.
*Hey, Rich, it's great to see you.
Please tell me how've you been.
I knew it was you from across the room.
You've greyed a bit since then.
Yeah, my road to here wasn't always straight.
But, the curves were often fun.
And when they weren't, oh what the hell
Could have happened to anyone.*

Remember the moon over Little Falls Road?
Remember the baseball team?
Remember the mob in the bus port?
Remember Jack Alix on WEAM?
Home games at W&L?
The night of the Buckingham's?
Detention just for drawing cartoons?
Cramming all night for exams.
*Cheryl, it's great to see you.
Please tell me how've you been.
I knew it was you from across the room.
You've greyed a bit since then.
Seems I hardly knew you then
But we're old friends now.
Just a little gap since I saw you last
When a whole life happened somehow.*

*Fayle sat in front of me,
Haeringer behind.
Daydreams 'bout our futures
Were often in our minds.
Authors, poets, preachers,
Surgeons, nurses, teachers,
Bureaucrats, artists, musicians and dads,
Moms and mechanics, makers of ads.
But we're so much more than the jobs we did,
So much more than we imagined as kids.*

Can't be like we remembered,
Hell, we forgot a lot we learned
'Cept for what happened in chemistry.
Forget that, you might get burned.
Attitudes and platitudes
Carried forward or left behind.
Those four years are part of what we are
I hope they made me kind.

*Gerry, it's great to see you.
Please tell me how've you been.
I knew it was you from across the room.
You've greyed a bit since then.
Though it might be forever
'Till our paths might cross again,
When we meet at that crossing
We'll meet again as friends.*

13 Truth

It started back when tv ads
had less and less effect.
Folks were getting wiser
Crazy Eddie's sales were wrecked.
The economy was tanking
cause the people wouldn't buy.
Corporations were at a loss
What else could they try?
*Truth, truth, truth.
Every thing you hear is true.
Truth, truth, truth.
Nothing's too fantastic for you.
Truth, truth, truth.
No skeptics need apply.
The country's strangely different.
Now you know the reason why.*

The admen found a chemist
Unlike others who refused
To craft a drug for credulity
Sodium Pentothal he used.
He found a gap within a ring
A carbon he'd inject.
He dropped some in his partner's beer
To test his drug's effect.
He told his friend a story
About aliens and probes.
His friend soon believed that
it was happening round the globe.
The chemist, he was overjoyed.
The admen loved it too.
They dreamed up a conspiracy
To bring this stuff to you.

There's something in the water,
There's something in the beer.
People start believing
any story that they hear.
What started as a simple plan
To sell fast food and cars
Has people buying tickets
for a rocket ride to Mars.
Every drug has side effects
This one has em too.
You'll be buying more than products
When everything is true.
Its use breeds resentment.
Too much makes you grumpy.
Don't go discussing politics
Or Things get really bumpy.
Gullible, We're all gullible.
Believing everything we hear
Gullible, we're all gullible.
We get pushed around by fear.
Who has the courage to shout
That fool has no clothes?
Can't you sniff the odor?
What's a matter with your nose?

There's something in the water
There's something in the beer
We thought we were smart enough
That it can't happen here.