

## **All for Loving You**

©2001 by R.A. Gramann

About the time that time began,  
Before there was a past.  
All was sucked from nothing,  
In that giant primordial blast.  
You can ask the why's and wherefore's  
But from my point of view:  
There's only one reason for it all:  
It's all for loving you.

**For loving you**

**It's all for loving you**

**It's what I do.**

**I'm for loving you.**

That giant arrow of history  
Pointing right at you.  
It's all for loving you.

The fall of the Roman Empire  
Dark Ages into light  
Colonies in the new world  
Prosperity and the fights.  
All a giant conspiracy  
So I'd run into you.  
There's only one reason for it all:  
It's all for loving you.

**For loving you**

**It's all for loving you**

**It's what I do.**

**I'm for loving you.**

All a giant conspiracy  
So I'd run into you.  
It's all for loving you.

The students, the theologians,  
They wonder what it's for.  
Why the pleasures? Why the suffering?  
How come beer and how come war?  
Up close and personal  
I think I've thought it through  
The reason that I'm here on earth:  
It's all for loving you.

**For loving you**

**It's all for loving you**

**It's what I do.**

**I'm for loving you.**

Call it a compulsion  
But it's just what I do.  
It's all for loving you.

**Turn Out the Lights** ©2001 by R.A. Gramann

Fear of the unknown,  
Fear of the sounds at night.  
When I was a child,  
I slept better with a light.  
Until that night the lights went out  
When I really saw the stars  
Now I long for the darkest nights  
To lay out in the yard.

*Turn out the lights.  
Turn out the lights.  
Let the darkness fill the night sky  
Let the stars shine out so bright.  
Peer into the universe  
Feel humble and small.  
May the starlight and the wonder  
Shine down on us all.*

First Pleiades, then Orion  
Creep across the sky at night.  
There's still time to get Sirius  
See Pollux shine so bright.  
In summer there's the teapot  
Million worlds in that steam.  
Whose inhabitants watch the Milky Way  
And wonder what it means.

Lights of the city cloak  
The mystery and wonder.  
More a ceiling than a universe  
That's the sky we're under.  
That brightness makes your world so close  
Does it really banish fright?  
See farther in the darkness  
Than with the brightest light.

A fuzzy spot, a thousand stars  
The telescope reveals.  
And look into the blackness  
Where the planets dust congeals.  
Ride our planet through the history  
Of all that was and is  
While crickets chirp and bullfrogs burp  
And meteors downward whiz.

**You're Nothing But a Pack of Neurons** ©1992 by R.A. Gramann  
with apologies to Francis H.C. Crick

**You're nothing but a pack of neurons  
In a shapely bag of goo.  
All your thoughts and dreams,  
Your hopes and schemes  
Are electro-chemical, too.  
You are what you eat,  
From your head to your feet,  
So watch out what you chew.  
You're nothing but a pack of neurons,  
But I'm in love with you oo oo,  
I'm in love with you.**

Repeat first chorus

The first time I ever saw your face, dear,  
My ions began to diffuse.  
Your eyes aglow  
Made my sodium flow  
Through those membrane avenues.  
When our fingers unite,  
More than synapses excite,  
And your lips I can't refuse.  
I know we're more than just a chemical  
reaction,  
Cause I'm in love with you oo oo,  
I'm in love with you.

**You're nothing but a pack of neurons  
Controlling a bag of goo.  
All your thoughts and dreams,  
Your hopes and schemes  
Are electro-chemical, too.  
You are what you eat,  
'Cept for what you excrete,  
So watch out what you chew.  
You're nothing but a pack of neurons,  
But I'm in love with you oo oo,  
I'm in love with you.**

I'd like to know how my fondest memories  
Are stored in hydrocarbon slime.  
I can see your face,  
Feel your warm embrace,  
Or just think of you any time.  
Four million years of evolution,  
But we only get one lifetime.  
Let's go and mix our chromosomes together,  
Cause I'm in love with you oo oo,  
I'm in love with you.

Hard rain awoke me in the night.  
That only means one thing to me.  
A bunch of guys with plastic boats  
Will be skipping work today.  
Grandma has to die again  
We all meet at the edge of town,  
Driving for the eastern slopes  
To ride the water down.

**I love to ride the back  
Of a rushing mountain stream,  
To thread between the eddies  
Amidst the banks of April green.  
The icy water warms my blood,  
Waves splash over me,  
In the river I am young, I am free.**

To rise before the mist has cleared,  
To chase the rainfall down the hillside.  
Climb the goat trail road  
To the bank where I unload.  
I dress to seal my city skin  
From the icy mountain water in  
Which I'll float without my boat  
If I miss a brace.

As I paddle down the mountain stream  
The unsuspecting beaver  
slaps his tail and swims to flee  
the brightly colored threat.  
The drinking deer sniffs the air  
and bounds into the thicket  
While Blue Heron wing in front of me  
Then fly back overhead.

To rise before the mist has cleared,  
To chase the rainfall down the hillside.

**Rappahannock Running Free** © 1993 by R. A. Gramann

Again, the eagle beats his wings  
To climb above the trees  
Over the locks on the Rappahannock  
What's left of history.  
Where the Council and the contractors  
Over quality disagreed.  
Where the present meets the past  
And some things never change.

**For a man can only hold  
A piece of earth  
For a lifetime.  
Water leaks through fingers  
You can't hold it at all.  
I love the Rappahannock  
And its water running free.  
In the rapids of this river,  
That's where I want to be.**

From Carter's Run at Waterloo  
It drops three hundred feet.  
Forty-seven locks in fifty miles  
1849 complete.  
With first year's drought and railroads  
So quickly obsolete.  
A canal system for just four years  
And history ever since.

An aqueduct and wood crib dam  
Fed power to the mills,  
And factories and tanneries  
The foundations are there still.  
The concrete dam in 1910  
Electric generators until  
Only thirty years ago  
And now a poor man's home.

Poison ivy coats the bank  
Where you climb around the dam.  
A century and a half of portages  
Canoes across the land.  
The damn dam blocks the spawning fish  
Floods rapids behind the span.  
I say its time to blow it up.  
There's no need for this dam.

## The Battle of the Squirrel and the CEO

© 1992 by R.A. Gramann

Captain of industry,  
Corporate leader,  
Retired to the country,  
Set up a bird feeder.  
Finch-colored plumage,  
And not before eight,  
The chorus of birdsong  
Not boardroom debate.

But the squirrels eat the birdseed  
Frighten finches away.  
The squirrels they get fat.  
They pig-out all day.  
Chased away from the feeder  
They're back when your gone.  
Scourge of retirees  
The fiends of the lawn.

**When you fight the squirrels,  
You get no holidays,  
No vacation, no weekend.  
The squirrels elude your grand designs.  
Each day they eat again.  
When you fight the squirrels,  
Don't let your guard down,  
Keep your wits sharp till the end.  
There's nothing else that matters,  
You've got that birdseed  
To defend.**

He put the birdfeeder  
Up on a pole.  
But that didn't deter  
The squirrel from his goal.  
A coating of Crisco  
Didn't get in his way.  
The squirrel climbed right up  
To a birdseed buffet.

A flange on the pole  
Just slowed him down.  
The squirrel shook the pole,  
Knocked seed to the ground.  
The angry retiree  
Will try anything.  
To avoid defeat  
By this takeover king.

Chorus

The feeder was hung  
By a rope from a tree.  
But squirrels can climb ropes  
When the birdseed is free.  
A sheet metal barrier  
Didn't stop him for long.  
He gnawed through the rope  
And he ate all day long.

So if you have wondered  
Why the world's such a mess,  
Look what men do  
When they're doing their best.  
Outsmarted by rodents,  
Too proud to give in,  
They use up their retirement  
In a fight they can't win.

**Kid's Talk** © 1998 by R.A.&M.L.  
Gramann

It might be oral tradition.  
It might be in the genes.  
They didn't learn it from their parents.  
Did they hear it in their dreams?  
March of civilization  
Hasn't changed the playtime screams.  
Voices from the children  
Still reflect the same old themes:

**It's mine.**  
**Give it back**  
**I'm gonna tell.**  
**I don't care.**  
**You're it**  
**No tag backs.**  
**Me first.**  
**It's not fair.**

If it hadn't been said before,  
They'd have to make it up.  
When you're only four years old,  
Your feelings just erupt.  
If you can't remember  
What it's like to be so small  
Walk by any playground  
Listen to the calls.

They say the world is changing.  
Not like when we were young.  
Folks are mean, the ozone's lean,  
Even children carry guns.  
But if you listen to the little kids  
You might suspect that they're the same.  
Try remembering what it felt like  
To play in children's games.

*Kickball, football, slides and swings.*  
*Race and fight, roll on the ground.*  
*Jumping rope, they dance and sing*  
*Might be loud, that's how fun sounds.*

Childhood is for learning  
About other times than today,  
About life and love and planning  
And why all things can't be play.  
About the little deals and big deals,  
And how to wait your turn,  
And when it's best to walk away  
And when you should return.

**Try to Change It** © 2000 by R.A.  
Gramann

Must have been the onions  
Caused this funny state I'm in.  
Another try, you'll have to pry  
Your way under my skin.  
Thank you for the onions  
That really touched my heart.  
I feel just like that vegetable  
With layers come apart.

**Try to change it.  
But I can't change it.  
Locomotive rolls on  
Through hills, and snow, and rain.  
Try change it  
Why can't I change it?  
Strength of will, push and pull,  
I'm bettin' on that train.**

Gotta focus  
Time is growing short  
I beg for concentration,  
I count on your support.  
If it weren't so difficult  
I'd a finished yesterday  
Ask me just what I need  
I need another day.

*Thinking 'bout mortality  
Thinking 'bout the truth  
More likely gonna slow that train  
Than slow the loss of youth.*

That sad song on the radio  
It didn't bring the tears  
Thinking 'bout the ones I loved  
And haven't seen for years.  
Can't be like it used to be  
No comfort from the past  
What have you done for me today?  
What's ever built that lasts?

**Each One's a Little Bit Different** ©2001  
by R.A. Gramann

I'd like to take each one of 'em home.  
Now, wouldn't that be fun?

*And each one's a little bit different  
Some with piercing notes,  
Crisp and vibrant.  
Some more mellow  
Like a bell.  
Or, a little warmer  
On the bottom.  
'Sides, I never held the view  
That I had to pick just one.  
I'd like to tickle each and every neck,  
And it's time that I begun.*

Mahogany's a stable wood.  
Sings out loud and clear.  
Bass is strong and airy.  
Richness everyone can hear.  
So says the Taylor catalog.  
With guitars of every style.  
You know it's hard to pick just one,  
So I'll just play awhile.

And there amongst all the woods  
Rosewood's lovely grain  
Deep brown shiny body,  
Rich harmonics, long sustain.  
Then there's koa, walnut, and sappel.  
Great sound from every one  
I'd like to take each one of 'em home.  
Now, wouldn't that be fun?

Then there's beer:

Beer from every nation  
Malt and hops and yeast.  
No way to put 'em in order  
From the greatest to the least.  
Pilsners, lagers, ales, and stouts,  
Flavors on the tongue.  
All the beers I love to savor  
So I'll drink every one.

Then there's women...

Instrumental break.

Chorus, then  
repeat last two lines with these words:

**Best of Friends** ©1998 R.A.Gramann

Thursday morning rainfall  
East side of the mountains  
Drops form into rivulets  
And gullies into streams.  
Sun was high on Monday  
When swirling Thursday's water  
Rode the river past the town  
But the river's still with me.

**River stays beside me  
Though the water's always changing.  
Waters blend, Best of friends.  
Best friends last all life.**

Want to finish 'fore the night falls.  
Start early in the morning.  
I'll carry up the shingles  
You hammer, then we'll trade.  
Side by side, we work along  
Words that matter weave among  
Our patter through the heat and sun,  
My best friend's here with me.

**We've stood so long together  
Though we both are always changing.  
Like waters blend, Best of friends.  
Best friends last all life.**

*Round my body like a favorite chair  
Wrinkles, folds, familiar air  
Details no one wants to know  
Each day I love you even more.*

Dusted by the grey sprite  
Just another milestone overnight.  
Memories from my childhood  
Don't seem so long ago.  
Yet every day, you're someone new.  
Each day, I fall in love with you.  
More certain than the sky is blue  
You'll be my friend for life.

**We've stood so long together  
Though we both are always changing.  
Best of friends, Next-of-kin.  
Best friends last all life.**

Thursday morning rainfall  
East side of the mountains  
Drops form into rivulets  
And gullies into streams.  
Sun was high on Monday  
When swirling Thursday's water  
Rode the river past the town  
But the river's still with me.

**River stays beside me  
Though the water's always changing.  
Like waters blend, Best of friends.  
Best friends last all life.**

**Best of friends, Next-of-kin.  
We'll be best friends for life.**

Last Sunday in October  
At 2:00 a.m.  
All the trains in the nation  
Stop right on plan.  
It's time to wait for  
The return of Standard Time.

But time goes on  
No matter what we do,  
The clock keeps on ticking  
Even when we're through  
I think it's time  
To talk about time reform.

**Metric time**  
**Makes it easy to count**  
**Your days away.**  
**Those powers of ten**  
**Make figuring when**  
**As simple as ...decimal addition.**

The basic unit of time  
Is still the day.  
You say, "Back in a milliday,"  
You mean "more than a minute."  
Eighty-six point four seconds  
To run to the room in back.

A football quarter  
Takes a centiday.  
The whole game is  
Forty millidays of play.  
The time clock has no colon,  
It just has a decimal point.

**Metric time**  
**Makes it easy to count**  
**Your days away.**  
**Those powers of ten**  
**Make remembering when**  
**As simple as ...decimal addition.**

The year can't match the sun  
Use the kiloday.  
Christmas comes once a kiloday  
It came too often, anyway.  
The downside is:  
Teens are middle-aged.

*First you drop the months*  
*With crazy lengths you can't remember.*  
*Each hecto has one hundred days*  
*Unusber to December.*

The days in a decaday  
Are numbered one through ten.  
You'll have to wait 'till Nineday to  
Have a nice deckend.  
And a scheduled dayoff  
Is still called a holiday.

**chorus**

So, I hope you can see  
How metric simplifies  
It eliminates confusion,  
It makes us all wise.  
Hear that train whistle,  
It must be the nine eighty-two point forty four.  
Right on time.

## **On the Edge**

©2000 by R.A. Gramann

Drinking from a spring  
Sleeping in the leaves  
Eating shoots and berries  
Live among the trees.  
Body growing dirty  
Body growing lean  
Body finding home  
Where it happens to be.

**On the edge of daylight**

**On the edge of woods**

**On the edge of habitation**

**On the edge of gone for good.**

Couple miles an hour  
That's fast enough for me  
Walking through the mountains  
A tunnel through the trees.  
Always kind of hungry  
Always getting by  
Drinking independence  
Sheltered by the sky.

So far from city lights  
Hardly ever see the stars  
Muscle pains, exhaustion  
Fast sleep when it gets dark.  
Wakened in the night  
Hear the possum waddle round  
My tent blocks his ramble  
A stranger on his ground.

So far from city lights  
So far from city life  
So far from city schedules  
So far from TV Guide  
So far from calculations  
So far from bank accounts  
Where money can't buy nothing  
Where you shave off every ounce.

*Some edges sharp and well-defined  
Like cliffs or knives or mother's scolds.  
But I live in fuzzy in-betweens  
Where it's hard to tell  
What's in the shadows.*

Is it magic in the shadows?  
Is it love of simple ways  
Is fleeing from the tech world  
Keeps me hiking every day?  
Is it touch with things that matter?  
Or disdain for things that don't  
Some days I think I'll go back  
Some days I think I won't.

All my food and home  
Riding in my pack  
A smelly but a simple life  
I carry on my back.  
Sometimes, I hit town for a shower  
And a restaurant cooked meal  
But soon I'm ready for the woods  
And that lonesome outdoor feel.

**The Barns** © 1993 by R.A. Gramann

White was once the color  
Of this old wood grey garage  
Back behind the farmhouse  
Next to the leaning barn.  
Decade since the last corn  
Neighbor cuts hay once a year.  
No more working fields at dawn.  
Only wildlife living here.

The smells of clay and gasoline,  
Old canvas, rope, and straw  
Greet the nostrils of the curious  
Who explore the old garage.  
Throw back the dusty canvas  
Worn out '47 Ford.  
Must have been to Richmond  
A hundred times or more.

Hey, look up in the rafters:  
A cedar-ribbed canoe  
With peeling skin and rotted seats  
And a hole that goes right through.  
The day he caught that catfish,  
Camping on the south sandbar,  
A childhood eighty years ago,  
In the boat above the car.

I still love to drive here  
To see the stars at night  
Though the city's glow  
Is brighter every year.  
Hear the barn creak in the summer breeze  
Watch the sky for satellites.  
Imagine that old farmer standing near.

And the weather, bugs, and fungus  
Make the barn lean more each year.  
The earth pulls on all things  
That stand above.  
Neglect surrenders to the wind.  
No reason left to stand  
Next generation's memories  
Will be town and not the land.

**When I Grow Up** © 2001 by R.A. Gramann

When I grow up,  
I want to be a cowboy.  
Yodel.  
Cowboy does what he wants to do  
Sleeps under the stars  
Rides across the open range  
With his horse and guitar.  
Spends his hard-earned money  
In smokey cowboy bars.  
Cowboy, that's the life for me

*The All American Hero  
Is independent and free  
Yodel.  
You might be thinkin' John Wayne,  
Well, I'm thinkin' it's me.  
Yodel.*

When I grow up,  
I wanna be a politician.  
Yodel.  
He does what he wants to do.  
Tries not to get caught.  
Makin' promises and kissing babes,  
Thinks he's really hot.  
Serving some constituents  
Claiming he's not bought.  
Politician, that's the life for me.

*The All American Hero  
Is independent and free  
Yodel.  
You might be thinkin' Rostenkowski,  
Well, I'm thinkin' that it's me.  
Yodel.*

When I grow up,  
I want to be a CPA.  
Yodel//Nunt uh?

When I grow up,  
I want to be a folksinger.  
Yodel  
Folksinger does what he wants to do  
Sleeps until 10,  
Sings till after midnight  
Writes songs now and then  
Never has much money  
Doesn't matter to him  
Folksinger, that's the life for me.

*The All American Hero  
Is independent and free  
Yodel.  
You might be thinkin' Woody Guthrie,  
Well, I'm thinkin' it's me.  
Yodel.*

*You might be thinkin' John Wayne,  
Well, I'm thinkin' it's me.  
Yodel.*

**Gravity** © 1993 by R.A. Gramann

When gravity  
No longer holds you down  
In a dream,  
You float through the sky.  
Past poles and wires  
Over roofs and yards  
Trying to swim back down  
Yelling below to people you know.

Laws of nature  
Don't seem to hold anymore.  
Time can't keep  
All things from happening at once.  
An ugly baby,  
Beautiful, full-grown,  
Launching from the nest, now  
Hair blowing behind you  
You're on your own.

*We all need time to wonder  
We need time to sit and stare  
At the stars, clouds, and people,  
And birds soaring through the air.*

When gravity  
No longer holds you down  
You've come of age,  
It's time to fly.  
Your dreams will lift you high  
Your dreams make the universe  
What it might be  
When you build your dreams,  
Build a room for me.

*We all need time to wonder  
We need time to sit and stare  
At the stars, clouds, and people,  
And birds soaring through the air.*

When gravity  
No longer holds you down  
You've come of age,  
It's time to fly.