

BLACKOUT POETRY LYRICS

Follow the Drinking Gourd performed by Eric Bibb

When the sun comes back

And the first quail calls

Follow the drinking gourd,

For the old man is a-waiting for to carry you to freedom

If you follow the drinking gourd

The riverbank makes a very good road

The dead trees will show you the way

Left foot, peg foot, traveling on,

Follow the drinking gourd

The river ends between two hills

Follow the drinking gourd

There is another river on the other side

Follow the drinking gourd

When the great big river meets the little river

Follow the drinking gourd

For the old man is a-waiting for to carry to freedom

If you follow the drinking gourd

Bibb, E. (1997). Follow the Drinking Gourd [Song]. On Shakin' a Tailfeather. Music for Little People.

Blackbird (1966) by Nina Simone

Why you wanna fly Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

Why you wanna fly Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

No place big enough for holding

All the tears you're gonna cry

Cause your mama's name was "Lonely"

And your daddy's name was "Pain"

And he called you "Little Sorrow"

Cus you'll never love again

Why you wanna fly Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

Why you wanna fly Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

You ain't got no one to hold you

You ain't got no one to care

If you'd only understand dear

Nobody wants you anywhere

So why you wanna fly, Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

Why you wanna fly, Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

You ain't got no one to hold you

You ain't got no one to care

So why you wanna fly, Blackbird?

You ain't ever gonna fly

You ain't ever gonna fly

Simone, N. (1966). Blackbird [Song]. On Nina Simone with Strings. Colpix Records.

Strange Fruit (1939) performed by Billie Holiday

Southern trees bear a strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees
Pastoral scene of the gallant South
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
Scent of magnolia, sweet and fresh
Then the sudden smell of burning flesh
Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck
For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck
For the sun to rot, for the tree to drop
Here is a strange and bitter crop

Holiday, B. (1939). Strange Fruit [Song]. Commodore.

What's Going On (1971) by Marvin Gaye

Mother, mother

There's too many of you crying

Brother, brother, brother

There's far too many of you dying

You know we've got to find a way

To bring some lovin' here today, yeah

Father, father

We don't need to escalate

You see, war is not the answer

For only love can conquer hate

You know we've got to find a way

To bring some lovin' here today, oh, oh, oh

Picket lines and picket signs

Don't punish me with brutality

Talk to me, so you can see

Oh, what's going on

What's going on

Yeah, what's going on

Ah, what's going on

(In the meantime)

Right on, baby

Right on babe

Right on babe

Mother, mother

Everybody thinks we're wrong

Oh, but who are they to judge us

Simply 'cause our hair is long?

Oh, you know we've got to find a way

Bring some understanding here today

Oh oh oh

Picket lines and picket signs

Don't punish me with brutality

C'mon talk to me

So you can see

What's going on

Yeah, what's going on

Tell me what's going on

I'll tell you what's going on

Ooh ooh ooh ooh

Right on baby

Right on, right on

Right on baby

Right on baby, c'mon, right on

Gaye, M. (1971). What's Going On [Song]. On What's Going On. Tamla.

Long Violent History (2020) by Tyler Childers

It's the worst that it's been since the last
time it happened

It's happening again right in front of our
eyes

There's updated footage, wild speculation

Tall tales and hearsay and absolute lies

Been passed off as factual when actually,
the actual

Causes they're awkwardly blockin' the way

Keeping us all from enjoyin' our evening

Shoving its roots through the screens in our
face

Now, what would you give if you heard my
opinion

Conjecturin' on matters that I ain't never
dreamed

In all my born days as a white boy from
Hickman

Based on the way that the world's been to
me

But it ain't never once made me scared just
to be

It's called me belligerent, it's took me for
ignorant

Could you imagine just constantly worryin'

Kickin' and fightin', beggin' to breathe

How many boys could they haul off this
mountain

Shoot full of holes, cuffed, and laid in the
streets

'Til we come in to town in a stark ravin'
anger

Looking for answers and armed to the teeth

30 aught sixes, papaw's old pistol

How many, you reckon, would it be, four or
five?

Oh, would that be the start of a long,
violent history

Of tuckin' our tails as we try to abide?

Oh, would that be the start of a long,
violent history

Of tuckin' our tails as we try to abide?

Childers, T. (2020). Long Violent History [Song]. On Long Violent History. Hickman Holler.

Eyes On the Prize (“Hold On”) performed by Sweet Honey in the Rock

Paul and Silas bound in jail	Hold on, hold on
Had no money for to go their bail	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	The only thing that we did was right
Hold on, hold on	Was the day we started to fight
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
Paul and Silas began to shout	Hold on, hold on
Jail door opened and they walked out	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	We met jail and violence too
Hold on, hold on	But God’s love will see us through
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
I got my hand on the gospel plow	Hold on, hold on
Wouldn’t take nothing for my journey now	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	Only chain that we can stand
Hold on, hold on	Is the chain o’ hand on hand
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
Well the only thing we did was wrong	Hold on, hold on
Stayed in the wilderness too long	Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on
Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on, hold on	on

Sweet Honey in the Rock. (2000). Eyes on the Prize (“Hold On”). On Freedom Song. Sony Masterworks.