

**Karl Plank**

**SONG OF A DYING MAN**

*Baby, it won't be long till I'll be tying on  
My flyin' shoes, flyin' shoes  
Till I'll be tying on my flyin' shoes*  
--Townes Van Zandt

Beside the Harpeth  
your eyes shut to see  
what could not be seen  
above-ground  
or on the surface of green water  
a November day past  
the battlefield  
its columns of corpses  
the buried  
your ears attuned to  
deep echoes  
that sound  
in the song  
of a dying man  
who would pray  
for rain to pause  
for seasons to linger  
for winter  
when light on the river  
clarifies  
silvers as a mirror  
in which you appear  
coming down  
from the mountain  
to help him rise  
from bloody ooze  
someone to tie on  
his flyin' shoes.

