

Footsteps on Floorboards

Note: The lyrics for this song won the Silver (2nd Place) prices in the 2023 Songwriters Association of Washington (SAW) annual songwriting contest!

Background: Mostly just a poem, so there is deliberately no chorus so as to not invoke repetition and distract from the progression and flow. The simple music can be omitted but was added to create somewhat of a song. The song style and Footsteps on Floorboards was inspired by the Cowboy Junkies and their take on Robert Johnson's Floorboard Blues from their first album. But the song theme is very different. It is about the thought process of someone terminally ill in hospice waiting to die, and at first still somewhat in denial while also in great fear of what lies beyond, if anything. Fearing someone or something coming to get him, still hanging onto life and fighting to survive, not accepting his imminent fate. Eventually it yields to finding peace at the very end where that great monster behind the door, the demon, was really a spirit guiding you to the next stage. I'd like to think that terminally ill people do not die in fear and desperation but find, at least in their very last moments, some semblance of peace and acceptance. From the movie Jacob's Ladder: "If you're frightened of dying and you're holding on, you'll see devils tearing your life away. But if you've made your peace, then the devils are really angels, freeing you from the earth."

Written: 2022

Arr.	Key	Time	Tuning	Tempo	Style	Capo
1	Em	4/4	Standard	110	Folk	None

Arrangement	1
Verse	Em Em Am Em
Bridge	Am C G D

Chords Used in this Song

Em	Am	C	G	D

Footsteps on Floorboards

(Song)

Verse 1

Em

Footsteps slither down the hall

Em

The floorboards creak beneath

Am

Whispers slide across the walls

Em

Like a knife into its sheath

Bridge 1

Am

Streetlights paint the windows

C

Shadows land oblique

G

She passes by in silhouette

D

Creating her mystique

Verse 2

Em

Footsteps along the corridor

Em

The floorboards croon and ache

Am

The wind outside spins wistfully

Em

Leaving carnage in its wake

Bridge 2

Am

Listen to the walls exhale

C

Each breath seems a last gasp

G

Listen to each heartbeat wail

D

Silence fills the gaps

Verse 3

Em

Footsteps echo through the room

Em

The floorboards bleed and sweat

Am

Reminiscence contains your mind

Em

Life's too short for regrets

Bridge 3

Am

Unspoken words hang in the air

C

A tranquil interlude

G

Best to have words left unspoken

D

Than have words misconstrued

Verse 4

Em

Footsteps pace behind the door

Em

The floorboards resonate

Am

The lock snaps, the knob turns

Em

The walls reverberate

Bridge 4

Am

Her essence floats into the room

C

Her scent permeates

G

Candles flicker as she moves

D

Then like mist, disintegrates

Verse 5

Em

Footsteps crawl across the floor

Em

The floorboards speak your name

Am

Relief, at last, the demon's gone

Em

As the ghost blows out the flame

Bridge 5

Am

Time collapses like a dying star

C

White light fades to gray

G

Mourning yields to silence

D

Em

As each heartbeat fades away

Footsteps on Floorboards

(Poem)

Footsteps slither down the hall
The floorboards creak beneath
Whispers slide across the walls
Like a knife into its sheath

Streetlights paint the windows
Shadows land oblique
She passes by in silhouette
Creating her mystique

Footsteps along the corridor
The floorboards croon and ache
The wind outside spins wistfully
Leaving carnage in its wake

Listen to the walls exhale
Each breath seems a last gasp
Listen to each heartbeat wail
Silence fills the gaps

Footsteps echo through the room
The floorboards bleed and sweat
Reminiscence contains your mind
Life's too short for regrets

Unspoken words hang in the air
A tranquil interlude
Best to have words left unspoken
Than have words misconstrued

Footsteps pace behind the door
The floorboards resonate
The lock snaps, the knob turns
The walls reverberate

Her essence floats into the room
Her scent permeates

Candles flicker as she moves
Then like mist, disintegrates

Footsteps crawl across the floor
The floorboards speak your name
Relief, at last, the demon's gone
As the ghost blows out the flame

Time collapses like a dying star
White light fades to gray
Mourning yields to silence
As each heartbeat fades away

Footsteps on Floorboards

Verse: Em Em Am Em	Bridge: Am C G D
Verse 1 Footsteps slither down the hall The floorboards creak beneath Whispers slide across the walls Like a knife into its sheath	Verse 4 Footsteps pace behind the door The floorboards resonate The lock snaps, the knob turns The walls reverberate
Bridge 1 Streetlights paint the windows Shadows land oblique She passes by in silhouette Creating her mystique	Bridge 4 Her essence floats into the room Her scent permeates Candles flicker as she moves Then like mist, disintegrates
Verse 2 Footsteps along the corridor The floorboards croon and ache The wind outside spins wistfully Leaving carnage in its wake	Verse 5 Footsteps crawl across the floor The floorboards speak your name Relief, at last, the demon's gone As the ghost blows out the flame
Bridge 2 Listen to the walls exhale Each breath seems a last gasp Listen to each heartbeat wail Silence fills the gaps	Bridge 5 Time collapses like a dying star White light fades to gray Mourning yields to silence As each heartbeat fades away
Verse 3 Footsteps echo through the room The floorboards bleed and sweat Reminiscence contains your mind Life's too short for regrets	
Bridge 3 Unspoken words hang in the air A tranquil interlude Best to have words left unspoken Than have words misconstrued	