

# Tom Waits

## Quotes

*Song, Thinking, People, Writing, Men, Hands, Long, Way, Rain, Dog, Kids,  
Years, Trying, Knows, Ideas, Art, Dream, Important, Kind, Children*

A gentleman is someone who can play the accordion, but doesn't.

~Tom Waits

Don't plant your bad days. They grow into weeks. The weeks grow into months. Before you know it, you got yourself a bad year. Take it from me - choke those little bad days. Choke 'em down to nothing.

~Tom Waits

We are buried beneath the weight of information, which is being confused with knowledge; quantity is being confused with abundance and wealth with happiness. We are monkeys with money and guns.

~Tom Waits

when your down on your luck and you've lost all your dreams theres nothing like a campfire and a can of beans

~Tom Waits

I'd rather have a free bottle in front of me than a prefrontal lobotomy.

~Tom Waits

The folks who know the truth aren't talking.... The ones who don't have a clue, you can't shut them up!

~Tom Waits

I like beautiful melodies telling me terrible things.

~Tom Waits

You have to keep busy. After all, no dog's ever pissed on a moving car.

~Tom Waits

When I was younger, I wanted to be older. Now I am older, I am not quite so sure.

~Tom Waits

Most people don't care if you're telling them the truth or if you're telling them a lie, as long as they're entertained by it.

~Tom Waits

The world is a hellish place, and bad writing is destroying the quality of our suffering.

~Tom Waits

Sing me a rainbow. Steal me a dream.

~Tom Waits

I like my music with the rinds and the seeds and pulp left in.

~Tom Waits

If you get far enough away you'll be on your way back home.

~Tom Waits

I've always believed that the way you affect your audience is more important than how many of them are there.

~Tom Waits

I always thought songs are movies for the ears and films are like songs for the eyes.

~Tom Waits

I don't have a drinking problem 'Cept when I can't get a drink.

~Tom Waits

The way you do anything is the way you do everything.

~Tom Waits

Most of the people I admire, they usually smell funny and don't get out much. It's true. Most of them are either dead or not feeling well.

~Tom Waits

She's got the whole dark forest living inside of her.

~Tom Waits

Don't you know there ain't no devil, it's just god when he's drunk.

~Tom Waits

You're my North Star when I'm lost and feeling blue.

~Tom Waits

Oh, I'm not a percussionist, I just like to hit things.

~Tom Waits

I started out with nothing and I still got most of it left.

~Tom Waits

I'll be clickin' by your house about two forty-five, Sidewalk Sundae Strawberry Surprise.

~Tom Waits

Let me fall out of the window/ With confetti in my hair

~Tom Waits

Don't look back, because someone might be gaining on you.

~Tom Waits

If there's one thing you can say about mankind, there's nothing kind about man.

~Tom Waits

The trick is to have a career and have a family. It's like having two dogs that hate each other and you have to take them for a walk every night.

~Tom Waits

It's hard to play with a bagpipe player. It's like an exotic bird. I love the

sound, it's like strangling a goose.

~Tom Waits

I'll tell you all my secrets but I lie about my past.

~Tom Waits

I did my time in the jail of your arms

~Tom Waits

Come down off the cross, we could use the wood.

~Tom Waits

Arithmetic arithmetock Turn the hands back on the clock How does the ocean rock the boat? How did the razor find my throat? The only strings that hold me here Are tangled up around the pier.

~Tom Waits

I like turning on two radios at once. I like hearing things wrongâ€¦ I get a lot of ideas by mishearing things.

~Tom Waits

Time is just memory Mixed in with Desire.

~Tom Waits

I admit that I ain't no angel, I admit that I ain't no saint - I'm selfish and I'm cruel and I'm blind. If I exorcise my devils, well my angels may leave too. When they leave they're so hard to find.

~Tom Waits

The average person spends two weeks over their lifetime waiting for the traffic light to change.

~Tom Waits

All the donuts have names that sound like prostitutes

~Tom Waits

I made a wish on a sliver of moonlight A sly grin and a bowl full of stars

~Tom Waits

The fact is most of the things that people know about me are made up. My own life is backstage. So what you "know" about me is only what I allowed you to know about me.

~Tom Waits

slept all night in the cedar grove, i was born to ramble, born to rove,  
some men are searchin' for the holy grail, but there ain't nothin' sweeter  
than ridin' the rails

~Tom Waits

Their memory's like a train: you can see it getting smaller as it pulls  
away And the things you can't remember Tell the things you can't forget  
that History puts a saint in every dream.

~Tom Waits

You got to tell me the brave captain Why are the wicked so strong?  
How do the angels get to sleep When the devil leaves the porch light  
on?

~Tom Waits

I'm always looking for sounds that are pleasing at the time. The sound  
of a helicopter is really annoying until you're drowning, and it's there to  
rescue you. Then it sounds like music.

~Tom Waits

I'm not fighting for justice. I am not fighting for freedom. I am fighting for  
my life and another day in the world here.

~Tom Waits

For a songwriter, you don't really go to songwriting school; you learn by listening to tunes.

~Tom Waits

I'll take a rusty nail and scratch your initials on my arm.

~Tom Waits

I'm the type of guy who'd sell you a rat's asshole for a wedding ring.

~Tom Waits

The sight of the first woman in the minimal two-piece was as explosive as the detonation of the atomic bomb by the U.S. at Bikini Island in the Marshall Isles, hence the naming of the bikini.

~Tom Waits

But then I'm one of those guys that is still a bit afraid of the telephone, its implications for conversation. I still wonder if the jukebox might be the death of live music.

~Tom Waits

I just don't like the word 'fun'--it's like Volkswagen, or bell-bottoms, or patchouli-oil or bean-sprouts...it rubs me up the wrong way.

~Tom Waits

It's rather mystifying when you think about writing songs - where they come from, and how they're born.

~Tom Waits

There's a beauty of show business. It's the only business you can have a career in when you're dead.

~Tom Waits

I put food on the table and roof overhead. But I'd trade it all tomorrow for the highway instead.

~Tom Waits

Leona Helmsley's dog made \$12 million last year... and Dean McLaine, a farmer in Ohio, made \$30,000. It's just a gigantic version of the madness that grows in every one of our brains.

~Tom Waits

I guess I've always lived upside down when I want things I can't have.

~Tom Waits

Not the kind of wheel you fall asleep at.

~Tom Waits

I hate Disneyland. It primes our kids for Las Vegas.

~Tom Waits

Don't plant your days they turn into weeds

~Tom Waits

There's always free cheddar in the mousetrap, baby.

~Tom Waits

The ocean doesn't want me today, But I'll come back tomorrow to play.  
The riptide is waging And the life guard's away But the ocean doesn't  
want me today

~Tom Waits

My wife called me a mule. She once said, "I didn't marry a man; I married a mule!" I kept thinking about it. It was in the back of my head. I think it makes a good title for an album.

~Tom Waits

And the earth died screaming, while I lay dreaming.

~Tom Waits



On my gravestone, I want it to say, "I told you I was sick."

~Tom Waits

Writing songs is like capturing birds without killing them. Sometimes you end up with nothing but a mouthful of feathers.

~Tom Waits

The piano has been drinking, not me.

~Tom Waits

I was born in the back seat of a Yellow Cab in a hospital loading zone and with the meter still running. I emerged needing a shave and shouted 'Time Square, and step on it!'

~Tom Waits

You can learn a lot about a woman by getting smashed with her.

~Tom Waits

I don't think that you should be perfectly candid and frank about the intimate details of your personal life with the public at large. Subsequently, it creates considerable personal problems.

~Tom Waits

You're innocent when you dream.

~Tom Waits

I always had a great appreciation for jazz, but I'm a very pedestrian musician. I get by. I like to think that my main instrument is vocabulary.

~Tom Waits

I think some bands thrive on the idea of changing instruments. When they're off their real instrument, the ability to go very far from the original idea is reduced.

~Tom Waits

Presley's what I go by, why don't you change the station.

~Tom Waits

Sometimes the magnetism of a song is impossible to ignore, and it demands that it be sung in a certain way.

~Tom Waits

Oh, I got a beautiful 1959 Cadillac Coupe DeVille four-door. No one will ride in it with me.

~Tom Waits

Bill Hicks - blowtorch, excavator, truthsayer, and brain specialist. He will correct your vision. Others will drive on the road he built.

~Tom Waits

It was a hubba, hubba, ding dang, baby you are just everythang.

~Tom Waits

You've gotta have somebody to trust, that knows a lot.

~Tom Waits

You learn as much from your kids as they learn from you.

~Tom Waits

We are buried beneath the weight of information, which is being confused with knowledge; quantity is being confused with abundance and wealth with happiness.

~Tom Waits

If I exorcise my devils, all my angels may go, too.

~Tom Waits

Jimmy Stewart said he stopped making movies because he didn't like the way he looked on screen anymore. I'm more the guy who says I

look like hell but I'm going to see where it gets me.

~Tom Waits

Songs are really just very interesting things to be doing with the air.

~Tom Waits

I've lost my equilibrium, my car keys, and my pride.

~Tom Waits

Champagne for my real friends and real pain for my sham friends.

~Tom Waits

All that you've loved is all you own

~Tom Waits

It's a battered old suitcase and a hotel someplace and a wound that will never heal.

~Tom Waits

I do some acting. And there's a difference between "I do some acting" and "I'm an actor."

~Tom Waits

Photos are profound because they have such short lives. They are more like fingerprints, dead leaves, rain puddles, or the corpses of flies.

~Tom Waits

I'm trying to get music ideas that come and keep them alive. It's like carrying water in your hands. I want to keep it all, and sometimes by the time you get to the studio you have nothing.

~Tom Waits

I don't like hearing Beatles songs in commercials. It almost renders

them useless. I think, 'Oh God, another one bites the dust.'

~Tom Waits

I think all songs should have weather in them. Names of towns and streets, and they should have a couple of sailors. I think those are just song prerequisites.

~Tom Waits

I'm just trying to make a buck like everyone else.

~Tom Waits

I'm so horny the crack of dawn better watch out.

~Tom Waits

I hope I'm becoming more eccentric. More room in the brain.

~Tom Waits

Most songs that aren't jump-rope songs, or lullabies, are cautionary tales or goodbye songs and road songs.

~Tom Waits

The Music was like Electric Sugar

~Tom Waits

It's the same with men as with horses and dogs, nothing wants to die.

~Tom Waits

I was always laughing in church.

~Tom Waits

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