

# Tom Waits, Nighthawk Postcards From Easy Street

Goodness gracious...my bass player should be chained up somewhere  
I wanna take you on a kind of inebriational travelogue here  
Well, ain't got no spare, you ain't got no jack, you don't give a shit you ain't never coming back  
Maybe your standing on the corner of 17th and Wazee Streets, yeah  
Out in front of the Terminal bar there's a Thunderbird moving in muscatel sky  
You've been drinking cleaning products all night  
Open for suggestions  
It's a kinda about eh...well it's kinda about going down to the corner and say  
'Well I'm just going down to the corner to get a pack of cigarettes I'll be back in a minute'  
Yeah, check out the street and it looks likes kinda of a...  
Kinda of a blur drizzle down the plateglass  
And there's a neon swizzle stick stirring up the sultry night air  
Looks like a yellow biscuit of a buttery cue ball moon  
Rollin' maverick across an obsidian sky  
As the busses go groanin' and wheezin',  
Down on the corner I'm freezing  
On a restless boulevard in a midnight road  
I'm across town from EASY STREET  
With the tight knots of moviegoers and out of towners on the stroll  
The buildings towering high above  
Lit like dominoes or black dice  
Used car salesmen dressed up in Purina Checkerboard slacks  
And Foster Grant wrap-around  
Pacing in front of rainbow EARL SCHLEIB \$39.95 merchandise  
Like barkers at a shooting gallery  
They throw out kind of a Texas Guinan routine  
&quot;Hello sucker, we like your money just as well as anybody else's here  
Come on over here now  
Let me put the cut back in your strut and the glid back in your slide  
Now climb aboard a custom Oldmobile and let me take you for a ride&quot;  
Or they give you the P.T. Barnum bit  
&quot;There's a sucker born every minute  
You just happened to be comin' along at the right time you know  
Come over here&quot;  
Well you know, all the harlequin sailors are on the stroll  
In a search of &quot;LIKE NEW,&quot; &quot;NEW PAINT,&quot;  
And decent factory air and AM-FM dreams  
And all the piss yellow gypsy cabs  
That stack up in the taxi zones and the're waiting like pinball machines  
To be ticking off a joy ride to a magical place  
Like truckers welcome diners  
With dirt lots full of Peterbilts and Kenworths and Jimmy's and the like  
They're hiballin' with bankrupt brakes  
Man, the're over driven and the're under paid  
The're over fed and the're a day late and a dollar short  
Christ I got my lips around a bottle and I got my foot on the throttle  
And I'm standing on the corner  
Standing on the corner like a &quot;just in town&quot; jasper  
I'm on a street corner with a gasper  
Looking for some kind of Cheshire billboard grin  
Stroking a goateed chin, using parking meters as walking sticks On the inebriated stroll  
With my eyelids propped open at half mast

But you know over at Chubb's Pool Hall and Snooker  
Well it was a nickle after two, yea it was a nickle after two  
And in the cobalt steel blue dream smoke  
Why it was the radio that groaned out the hit parade  
And the chalk squeaked and the floorboards creaked  
And an Olympia sign winked through a torn yellow shade  
Old Jack Chance himself leaning up against a Wurlitzer  
And he was eyeballing out a 5 ball combination shot  
Impossible you say? Hard to believe?  
Perhaps out of the realm of possibility? Nah  
Cause he'll be stretchin' out long tawny fingers

Out across a cool green felt in a provocative golden gate  
He got a full table railshot that's no sweat  
And I leaned up against my bannister  
And wandered over to the Wurlitzer and I punched A-2  
I was lookin' for maybe 'Wine, Wine, Wine' by the Night Caps  
Starring Chuck E. Weiss or maybe...  
Maybe a little something called 'High Blood Pressure'  
By George 'cryin' in the streets' Perkins, no dice  
'Cause that's life,' that's what all the people say  
Your riding high in April, seriously shot down in May  
But I know I'm gonna change that tune  
When I'm standing underneath a buttery moon That's all melted off to one side

It was just about that time that the sun came crawlin' yellow out of a manhole  
At the foot of 23rd Street and a dracula moon in a black disguise  
Was making its way back to its pre-paid room at the St. Moritz Hotel  
(scat)  
The El train tumbled across the trestles  
And it sounded like the ghost of Gene Krupa  
With an overhead cam and glasspacks  
And the whispering brushes of wet radials on wet pavement  
With a traffic jam session on Belmont tonight  
And the rhapsody of the pending evening  
I leaned up against my bannister  
And I've been looking for some kind of an emotional investment  
With romantic dividends, yeah kind of a physical negotiation is underway  
Well, as I attempt to consolidate all my missed weekly rendezvous  
Into one-low-monthly payment, through the nose, yeah  
With romantic residuals and legs akimbo  
But the chances are that more than likely  
Standing underneath a moon holding water  
I'll probably be held over for another smashed weekend