

Gambler

Bobby Bare

On the warm summer's evening on a train bound for nowhere
I met up with a gambler we were both too tired to sleep
So we took turns a starin' out window at the darkness
Till boredom overtook us and he commenced to speak.

He said, "Son I made a life out of readin' people's faces
And knowin' what the cards were by the way they held their eyes
So if you don't mind my sayin', I can see you're out of aces
For a taste of your whiskey I would give you some advice."

So I handed him my bottle and he drank down my last swallow
Then he'd bummed a cigarette then he bummed a light
And the night got deathly quiet and his face lost all expression
He said, "If you gonna play the game boy you gotta learn to play it right."

"You, you gotta know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em
Know when to walk away, know when to run
You never count your money when you're sittin' at the table
There'll be time enough for countin' when the dealin' is done."

"Now, every gambler knows that the secret to survival
Is knowin' what to throw away and knowin' what to keep
'Cause every hand's a winner just like every hand's a loser
And the best that you can hope for is to die in your sleep."

So when he finished speaking he turned back toward the window
Crushed out his cigarette, faded off to sleep
Somewhere in the darkness the gambler he broke even
In his final words I found an ace that I could keep.

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