

## Missing My Son

Tom Waits

I was in a line at the supermarket the other day, and uhm... y' know, I had all my things on the little conveyor belt there. And uh... there's a gal in front of me that is uh.. well, she's staring at me and I'm getting a little nervous and uh, she continues to stare at me. And I uh, I keep looking the other way. And then, finally she comes over closer to me and she says: "I apologize for staring, that must have been annoying. I, I... You look so much like my son, who died. I just can't take my eyes off you." And she precedes to go into her purse and she pulls out a photograph of her son who'd died. And uh, he looks absolutely nothing like me. In fact he's... Chinese. Uh... anyway, we chatted a little bit. And uh, she says: "I'm sorry, I have to ask you. Would you mind, as I leave the supermarket here, would you mind saying "Goodbye mom" to me? I, I know it's a strange request but I haven't heard my son saying "Goodbye mom" to me, and "So long" and it would mean so much to me to hear it. And uh, if you don't mind I... " And I said: "Well, you know, okay, yeah, sure. Eh.. uh... I can say that." And, and so, she uh gets her groceries all checked out. And uh, as she's going out the door she waves at me and she hollers across the store: "Goodbye son!" And I look up and I wave and I say: "Goodbye mom!" And then she goes, and uh... So I get my few things there, on the conveyor belt and the checker checks out my things. And uh, and he gives me the total and he says: "That'll be four hundred and seventy nine dollars." Uh... and I said: "Well, how is that possible! I've only got a little tuna fish, and uh some skimmed milk, and uh mustard and a loaf of bread..." He goes: "Well, well you're also paying for the groceries for your mother. She uh, told me you'd take care of the bill for her." And I said: "Well, wait a minute! That's not my mother!" And he says: "Well I distinctly heard her say as she left the store "Bye son!" and you said "Bye mom!" and so what are you trying to say here, uh..." I said: "Well, JESUS!" And I looked out into the parking lot and she was just getting into her car. And I ran out there. And she was just closing the door, and she had a little bit of her leg sticking out of the door and she was pulling away and I grabbed her leg and I started PULLING it! Just the way... I'm pulling yours...