



Lowside of the Road: A Life of Tom Waits

Barney Hoskyns

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With his trademark growl, carnival-madman persona, haunting music, and unforgettable lyrics, Tom Waits is one of the most revered and critically acclaimed singer-songwriters alive today. After beginning his career on the margins of the 1970s Los Angeles rock scene, Waits has spent the last thirty years carving out a place for himself among such greats as Bob Dylan and Neil Young. Like them, he is a chameleonic survivor who has achieved long-term success while retaining cult credibility and outsider mystique. But although his songs can seem deeply personal and somewhat autobiographical, fans still know very little about the man himself. Notoriously private, Waits has consistently and deliberately blurred the line between fact and fiction, public and private personas, until it has become impossible to delineate between truth and self-fabricated legend.

Lowside of the Road is the first serious biography to cut through the myths and make sense of the life and career of this beloved icon. Barney Hoskyns has gained unprecedented access to Waits's inner circle and also draws on interviews he has done with Waits over the years. Spanning his extraordinary forty-year career from *Closing Time* to *Orphans*, from his perilous "jazzbo" years in 1970s LA to such shape-shifting albums as *Swordfishtrombones* and *Rain Dogs* to the Grammy Award winners of recent years, this definitive biography charts Waits's life and art step by step, album by album.

Barney Hoskyns has written a rock biography—much like the subject himself—unlike any other. It is a unique take on one of rock's great enigmas.



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