

# The Gambler

Kenny Rogers, written Don Schlitz (1978)

C F C  
On a warm summer's evening, on a train bound for nowhere,  
G7

I met up with the gambler. We were both too tired to sleep.

C F C  
So we took turns a-staring out the window at the darkness

F C G7 C  
Till boredom overtook us, and he began to speak.

F C  
He said, "Son, I've made a life out of reading people's faces

G7  
And knowing what their cards were by the way they held their eyes,

C F C  
And if you don't mind my saying I can see you're out of aces,

F C G7 C  
For a taste of your whiskey I'll give you some advice.

F C  
So I handed him my bottle and he drank down my last swallow.

G7  
Then he bummed a cigarette and asked me for a light,

C F C  
And the night got deathly quiet and his face lost all expression,

F C G7 C  
Said, "If you're gonna play the game boy, ya gotta learn to play it right.

F C  
You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em,

F C G7  
Know when to walk away, and know when to run.

C F C  
You never count your money when you're sitting at the table,

F C G7 C  
There'll be time enough for counting when the dealings done.

F C  
Every gambler knows that the secret to surviving

G7  
Is knowing what to throw away and knowing what to keep,

C F C  
Cause every hand's a winner, and every hand's a loser.

F C G7 C  
And the best that you can hope for is to die in your sleep.

F C  
And when he'd finished speaking he turned back towards the window,

G7  
Crushed out his cigarette and faded off to sleep.

C F C  
And somewhere in the darkness the gambler he broke even,

F C G7 C  
But in his final words I found an ace that I could keep.