

# Let's Talk Dusty!

The Ultimate Forum for Dusty Springfield Fans

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## Lyrics

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### [Lyrics \(#p47351\)](#)

by **SteveQ** » Thu Feb 03, 2011 2:14 pm

Hi all

I would be most interested to hear any of your answers to this one. Neil Tennant , in the Dusty edition of the South Bank show said Dusty didn't listen to lyrics,which I thought a strange thing to say. I didn't believe it.Then, I noticed in 1 of the 1960s interview clips with her on U Tube, she said the same thing about herself. She is was a great interpreter of lyrics in every song I 've ever heard her sing and it seems simply doesn't square up with what she, or Neil T said at all... Have I got this wrong or what? Any theories anyone....

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### [Re: Lyrics \(#p47358\)](#)

by **daydreamer** » Thu Feb 03, 2011 3:02 pm

I don't believe it either! I think the music is what grabbed her first, maybe that's what she really meant. She was reported to have left the studio in tears whilst recording I've Been Wrong Before, she talked of what Sandra meant to her and others, no one could sing If You Go Away with such feeling without it meaning something and we know she often spoke of the effect I Think It's Gonna Rain Today had on her. Sure, songs like Little by Little or other "throw away" songs as she called them, probably didn't mean much, but I'd be very surprised if some of the more heartfelt ones didn't.

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### [Re: Lyrics \(#p47360\)](#)

by **mnmcv1** » Thu Feb 03, 2011 3:16 pm

Dusty actually said that multiple times, that she didnt really pay attention to lyrics (she said it again in a 1990 interview). But I think Carole may be right...the music grabbed her initially, and perhaps a song with dispensable lyrics would cause her to have a casual attitude toward it.

You can't tell me when she was singing "Quiet Please, There's a Lady On Stage" at RAH she wasnt paying attention to those lyrics... 🤔

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### [Re: Lyrics \(#p47473\)](#)

by **SteveQ** » Sat Feb 05, 2011 8:48 am

That makes perfect sense,Carole that she was into the music first, but the songs you both mention

and so many more don't back it up. Anyway, I do understand it a bit more now, so thanks

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p47524)**

by **allherfaces** » Sat Feb 05, 2011 5:42 pm

I think Dusty's point is most evidenced in a song like YDHTSYLM which she originally heard in Italian and didn't understand the lyrics. And there are emotional songs she 'sold' that she didn't agree with the lyrics on...for example I'd Rather Leave While I'm in Love--Dusty remarked to the effect that no, that she always stayed on until the bitter end LOL. And yes, point taken about 'throw away' songs. But I most definitely agree with what you all are saying about most of the emotional songs.... I'd add to the list of ones you've mentioned Love Me By Name.

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p47542)**

by **Cardiff Bluesgirl** » Sat Feb 05, 2011 10:51 pm

this has been discussed before and I think it's just Dusty being Dusty, she interpreted everything she sang in too much detail not to care about the words. I think it's just like us all listening to something new, we like the sound etc first then the lyrics take you in further. she made some enigmatic remarks at times and often when she was just irritated by events around her, particularly journalists she had had enough of. who can blame her.

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p47827)**

by **SteveQ** » Wed Feb 09, 2011 1:36 pm

When you put it like that, Liz, it's making more sense. Who indeed can blame her? The daft questions they ask deserve daft answers. Or even enigmatic ones!! I'm just glad I'm not some kind of celebrity. Journalists must drive you round the bend. (I suppose there are compensations though). I can't bring the song, 'Love me by name' to mind. I will look for it when I get the chance.

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p47829)**

by **Corinna** » Wed Feb 09, 2011 3:30 pm

Here it is, Steve. 🎵

[youtube]<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXCayJWvHHY>[/youtube]

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p47901)**

by **SteveQ** » Thu Feb 10, 2011 12:24 pm

Thanks a lot Cor. I'm on LTD at work (in my lunchbreak of course!!). Unfortunately all the Video clips appear as a blank space here, as YouTube is 1 of many sites banned at work.. You can see the point, I suppose. People would never get any work done around here. I will catch up at home soon,

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p47915)**

by **Corinna** » Thu Feb 10, 2011 1:58 pm

I kind of see the point... glad they didn't ban LTD then! 😊 You got something to look forward to tonight.

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p48488)**

by **SteveQ** » Tue Feb 15, 2011 7:21 pm

Yes, she was really feeling the lyrics on that song. Very soulful performance. Thanks again ,Cor. There must be a lot of Dusty songs that I have never heard, each one feels like a discovery.

Another question on lyrics. I rather like the jazz number Earthbound Gypsy, and it has interesting lyrics, but anybody know what the song is all about?

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p48502)**

by **Corinna** » Tue Feb 15, 2011 8:36 pm

Now that is an interesting question, Steve! Anyone want to have a go?

Earthbound Gypsy.  
(Norma Tanega / White)

Trees that grow without ground  
Young leaves that fall in spring  
Ground hogs tell me play games  
My games would reel the world  
Ring around the pine tree  
Smile a game around the sunsweep  
Cry a game across the moonbeam  
Across the earthbound gypsy

Flowers build a green wall  
Blue flowers bloom in sand  
People tell me play games  
My games would reel the world  
Ring around the seaweed  
Ring your name around the sunsweep  
Cry your name across the moonbeam  
Tell the earthbound gypsy

Play your gypsy game in my world  
Give your magic word to the people  
Who live in the underground world without sun  
In the world without moonbeams  
The village down deep without

Purple leaves that seem red  
Grape vines that smile in fall  
Zebras tell me play games  
My games would spill the world  
Ring around the bean tree

Jump a game around the sunsweep, moonbeam  
 Magic earthbound gypsy  
 Jump the fence

Play your gypsy game in my world  
 Give your magic word to the people  
 Who live in the underground world without sun  
 In the world without moonbeams  
 The village down deep without


Purple leaves that seem red  
 Grape vines that smile in fall  
 Zebras tell me play games  
 My games would spill the world  
 Ring around the bean tree  
 Jump a game around the sunsweep, moonbeam  
 Magic earthbound gypsy  
 Jump the fence  
 Hah!

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p48536)**

by **jeffery** » Wed Feb 16, 2011 8:29 am

Great response to this topic.  
 Nothing matters, and what if it did?  
 Dusty was illuminated, and knew that the music transcends the words.  
 Any words (or meaning) could be manipulated to fit the song.  
 With Dusty I think it was how does it feel ? (to sing the song)  
 She wrote the words to: *Am I The Same Girl* ? a song which originally was instrumental. (Soulful Strut)  
 She wrote: *I'm Gonna' Leave You*.  
 You can't write things like that, and not *feel* them, or care about the words.  
 On other songs she changed the words to suit her needs.  
 She knew that the fans had a need to impose meaning on a song. ( even if it was their own. )  
 She sang *Wishin' and Hopin'* even if she didn't like it.  
 She sang back-up. Where the words are there just for the sake of harmony.( Gladys Thong )  
 Like most of us I believe she was moved when words meshed with music, and inspired particular emotions.

That's what gives us the joy of popular music. 

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p48586)**

by **jeffery** » Wed Feb 16, 2011 4:07 pm

**Corinna wrote:**

Now that is an interesting question, Steve! Anyone want to have a go?

Earthbound Gypsy.

(Norma Tanega / White)

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Jump the fence  
Hah!

Think about how hard it is to sing a song like this. Abstracted words with no relevant meaning. Often Dusty sang songs just for their level of difficulty. (Show off !)  
Listen to my namesake song *the Man With The Child In His Eyes*.  
At the end you can hear her say, "Phew, that was hard !"

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p48605)**

by **mnmcv1** » Wed Feb 16, 2011 6:04 pm

great observations, Jeffery! just a heads up- Dusty didn't actually write the lyrics to "Am I the Same Girl". She covered the song after hearing Barbara Acklin's version (which was actually recorded before "Soulful Strut", but that's another story 😊).

as for "Earthbound Gypsy", I love Norma's songwriting because the imagery is very vivid, yet abstract at the same time, so while the song may be about a very specific thing, it's still open to interpretation. 🤔 🌸 🧸

you mentioned "On other songs she changed the words to suit her needs". This is very true- i can think of many instances where lyrics were altered, sometimes to the benefit of the song (on "Easy Evil", I prefer "puppet" over "sucker", personally). But often I actually think it was unintentional, especially live. She says "Tacoma City" on "Dancing in the Street" at the NME show. She also uses different lyrics in her BBC TV show performances several times, most notably on "Nowhere to Run". I'm actually kind of a lyrics junkie, so this sometimes drives me a bit to distraction, particularly if it alters the meaning of the line. (sorry, it's my borderline OCD kicking in... 😊 )

i was listening to "Needle in a Haystack" the other day, and at the end she repeatedly says "you better regret", and considering the correct line is "you're gonna regret...the day you were born, girl", it actually doesn't make sense. Who knows, maybe she would've changed that had it been prepared for release. This is in no way to knock Dusty, but it does put her occasional comments about lyrics into perspective. I do think if a song was more fluffy or lightweight she did tend to have a more cavalier attitude toward the words. However, if it was a song with more substance, she dug her heels in on them, so to speak...

just my 2.5 cents. 😊

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### **Re: Lyrics (#p48625)**

by **jeffery** » Wed Feb 16, 2011 10:23 pm

🟢 That's good Markus. I'll have to look into the Barbara Acklin details.

Where did you learn about Dusty covering it ? (CDS/bible ?) I really appreciate misconceptions like that being cleared up.

My friend's band covers the song, and they always give credit to Dusty. They also do SOAP, and I wish I could post that one. It's a great cover, a little up tempo, and it brings everyone to their feet. In Carole King's *No Easy Way Down* she writes, "Now you're stranded alone, and the path is unknown", but Dusty sings "and the past is unknown". ????. Makes no sense... of course the past is known !

Coming from Dusty it doesn't matter... she makes it work... smooth as silk. If someone didn't point it out no one would ever notice. 🍷

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### Re: Lyrics (#p48698)

by **MissDustyFanatic** » Fri Feb 18, 2011 2:16 am

Personally, I think 'Earthbound Gypsy' is about being caught up in the rapture and joy of the beauty of nature, seeing green walls of flowers, sunlight, moonbeams dancing across the land, etc. And she's "telling" the earth to continue to amaze her in her world and hopefully the joy she feels will be spread to people who live underground, so to speak, and never notice the beauty that surrounds them.

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### Re: Lyrics (#p48703)

by **mnmcv1** » Fri Feb 18, 2011 3:20 am

good example, Jeffery...i actually like the change in lyric on "No Easy Way Down"- doesnt make much basic sense but it sounds poetic, especially the way Dusty sings it. I think that's actually one of the best vocals Dusty ever put down. 🍷👍

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### Re: Lyrics (#p48708)

by **jeffery** » Fri Feb 18, 2011 5:58 am

*MissDustyFanatic wrote:*

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🍷 Yeah, I can see that now. When you put it into words that all really sounds like a Norma Tanega thing.

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### Re: Lyrics (#p49226)

by **SteveQ** » Thu Feb 24, 2011 4:05 pm

Fascinating responses all round.. Thanks MissdustyFanatic for your clever thinking. I will appreciate the song all the more after reading your insight into the lyrics. I also like what you say, Jeffrey about how it feels to sing the song. There are many songs out there that don't seem coherent especially when you read the lyrics, but when sung to a great piece of music, it can be quite magical..

Procul Harum's 'Whiter Shade of Pale' is a famous example. Gary Booker who wrote and sang that timeless classic, has said since, that it wasn't really about anything, but it worked so well. And have ever read the words of Bruce Springsteen's 'Blinded by the light???? Windmills of your mind' is a obscure, but fascinating song in the original version.

When Dusty recorded it with that glorious arrangement. Wow. It feels like you could bathe in it.

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## **Re: Lyrics (#p49227)**

by **SteveQ** » Thu Feb 24, 2011 4:07 pm

Fascinating responses all round.. Thanks MissdustyFanatic for your clever thinking. I will appreciate the song all the more after reading your insight into the lyrics. I also like what you say, Jeffrey about how it feels to sing the song. There are many songs out there that don't seem coherent especially when you read the lyrics, but when sung to a great piece of music, it can be quite magical..

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