



# Those Were The Days


START


 Once upon a time there was a tavern Where we used to raise


 a glass or two Remember how we laughed away the hours

 And dreamed of all the great things we would do. Those were the days my friend

 We thought they'd never end We'd sing and dance for - ev - er and a day

 We'd live the life we choose. We'd fight and never lose For we were young

 and sure to have our way. La la la la la la La la la

 la la la La la la la La la la la la la **END**

# Lyrics

(Mary Hopkin version)

## Verse 1

Once upon a time there was a tavern  
Where we used to raise a glass or two  
Remember how we laughed away the hours  
And dreamed of all the great things we would do

## Chorus

Those were the days my friend  
We thought they'd never end  
We'd sing and dance forever and a day  
We'd live the life we choose  
We'd fight and never lose  
For we were young and sure to have our way  
La la la la la La la la la la La la la la  
La la la la la.

## Verse 2

Then the busy years went rushing by us  
We lost our starry notions on the way  
If by chance I'd see you in the tavern  
We'd smile at one another and we'd say

## Chorus

## Verse 3

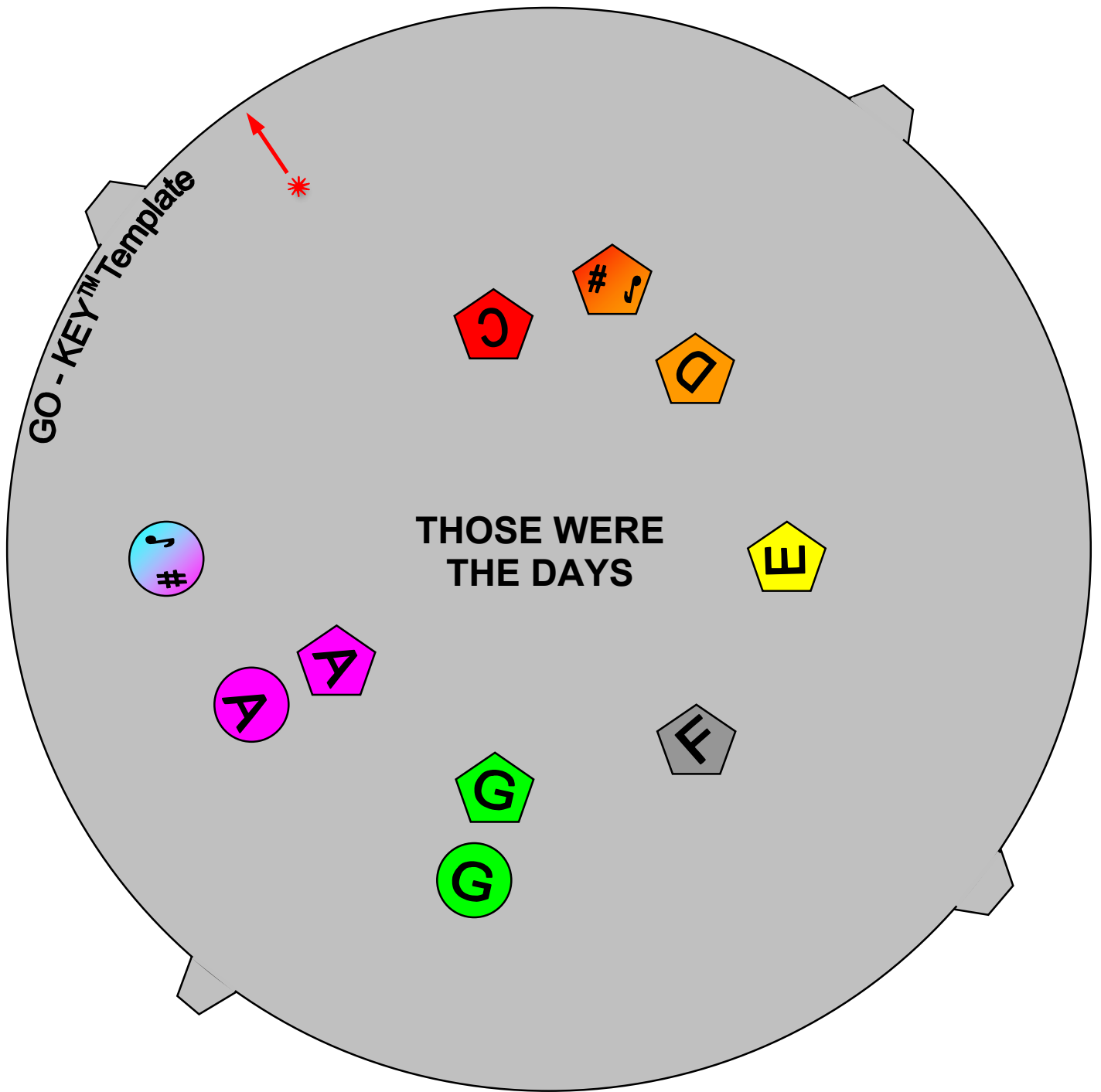
Just tonight I stood before the tavern  
Nothing seemed the way it used to be  
In the glass I saw a strange reflection  
Was that lonely woman really me

## Chorus

## Verse 4

Through the door there came familiar laughter  
I saw your face and heard you call my name  
Oh my friend we're older but no wiser  
For in our hearts the dreams are still the same

## Chorus



## History and Origin

"**Those Were the Days**" is a song credited to Gene Raskin, who put a new English lyric to the Russian romance song "Dorogoi dlinnoyu" ("Дорогой длинною", literally "By the long road"), composed by Boris Fomin (1900–1948) with words by the poet Konstantin Podrevsky. It deals with reminiscence upon youth and romantic idealism. Mary Hopkin's 1968 debut single of "Those Were the Days" (producer, Paul McCartney) became a number one hit on the UK Singles Chart. The song also reached number two on the Billboard Hot 100, behind "Hey Jude" by McCartney's band The Beatles. Georgian singer Tamara Tsereteli (1900–1968) and Russian singer Alexander Vertinsky made what were probably the earliest recordings of the song, in 1925 and in 1926 respectively. The song appears in the 1953 British/French movie *Innocents in Paris*, in which it was sung with its original Russian lyrics by the Russian Tzigane chanteuse Ludmila Lopato. Mary Hopkin's 1968 recording of it with Gene Raskin's lyric was a chart-topping hit in much of the Northern Hemisphere. On most recordings of the song, Raskin is credited as the sole writer, even though he wrote only the later English lyrics (which are not an English translation of the Russian lyrics) and not the music. In the early 1960s Raskin, with his wife Francesca, played folk music around Greenwich Village in New York, including White Horse Tavern. Raskin, who had grown up hearing the song, wrote with his wife new English lyrics to the old Russian music and then copyrighted both music and lyrics in his own name. The Limelites subsequently released a recording of the song on their 1962 LP *Folk Matinee*. The Raskins were international performers and had played London's "Blue Angel" every year, always closing their show with the song. Paul McCartney frequented the club and being quite taken with the song he attempted to get several singers or groups (including the early Moody Blues) to record it. Failing at that, after the formation of the Beatles' own Apple Records label, McCartney immediately recorded Mary Hopkin performing the song. He later said "I thought it was very catchy, it had something, it was a good treatment of nostalgia... (Hopkin) picked it up very easily, as if she'd known it for years." Hopkin's recording was produced by Paul McCartney with an arrangement by Richard Hewson and became a number-one hit on the UK Singles Chart. In the United States, Hopkin's recording reached number two on the Billboard Hot 100 (held out of the top spot for three weeks by "Hey Jude" by The Beatles) and topped the Billboard Easy Listening charts for six weeks. In the Netherlands, it topped the charts for two consecutive weeks.

### Notable Uses:

- 1959, Theodore Bikel recorded this song, in the original Russian language.
- 1968, The French version of the song, "Le temps des fleurs", was recorded by star Dalida.
- 1968, The Hungarian recording star Teri Harangozó recorded the Hungarian version.
- 1968, Vicky Leandros recorded the French version "Le temps des fleurs".
- 1969, Gene & Francesca recorded the song on their album *Hello Love on Tetragrammaton*.
- 1969, Bing Crosby recorded the song for his album *Hey Jude/Hey Bing!*
- 1969, Roger Whittaker recorded the song for his album *This Is Roger Whittaker*.
- 1974, Gigliola Cinquetti recorded song in Spain: "Aquellos fueron los dias".
- 1992, Leningrad Cowboys: in the album *We Cum from Brooklyn*.
- 2005, Il Folklorista recorded "Those Were the Days".
- 2005, Dolly Parton recorded an album *Those Were The Days*.
- 2007, Latvian instrumental cello rock trio Melo-M included a version in their album *Singalongs*.
- 2007, Japanese vocalist Noriko Mitose included a version on her album *Cotton*.
- 2010, Apple Records released *Come and Get It: The Best of Apple Records*, which included the song.
- 2010, Wilfredo, the comic alter ego of the British comedian Matt Roper, at the Salento Festival, Italy.
- 2011, The Iranian rock band Kiosk recorded this song on their album *Outcome of Negotiations*.
- 2013, Australian country artist Nia Robertson recorded the song on her album *The Woman I Am*.