



# Believe Me, if All Those Endearing Young Charms

START

  
Believe me, if all those endearing young charms, Which I gaze on

  
so fondly to-day, Were to change by to-morrow, and flee from my arms

  
Like fairy -gifts, fading away! Thou wouldst still be ador'd

  
as this moment thou art, Let thy loveliness fade as it will;

  
And, around the dear ruin, each wish of my heart Would entwine it-

 END  
self verdantly still!

## Lyrics

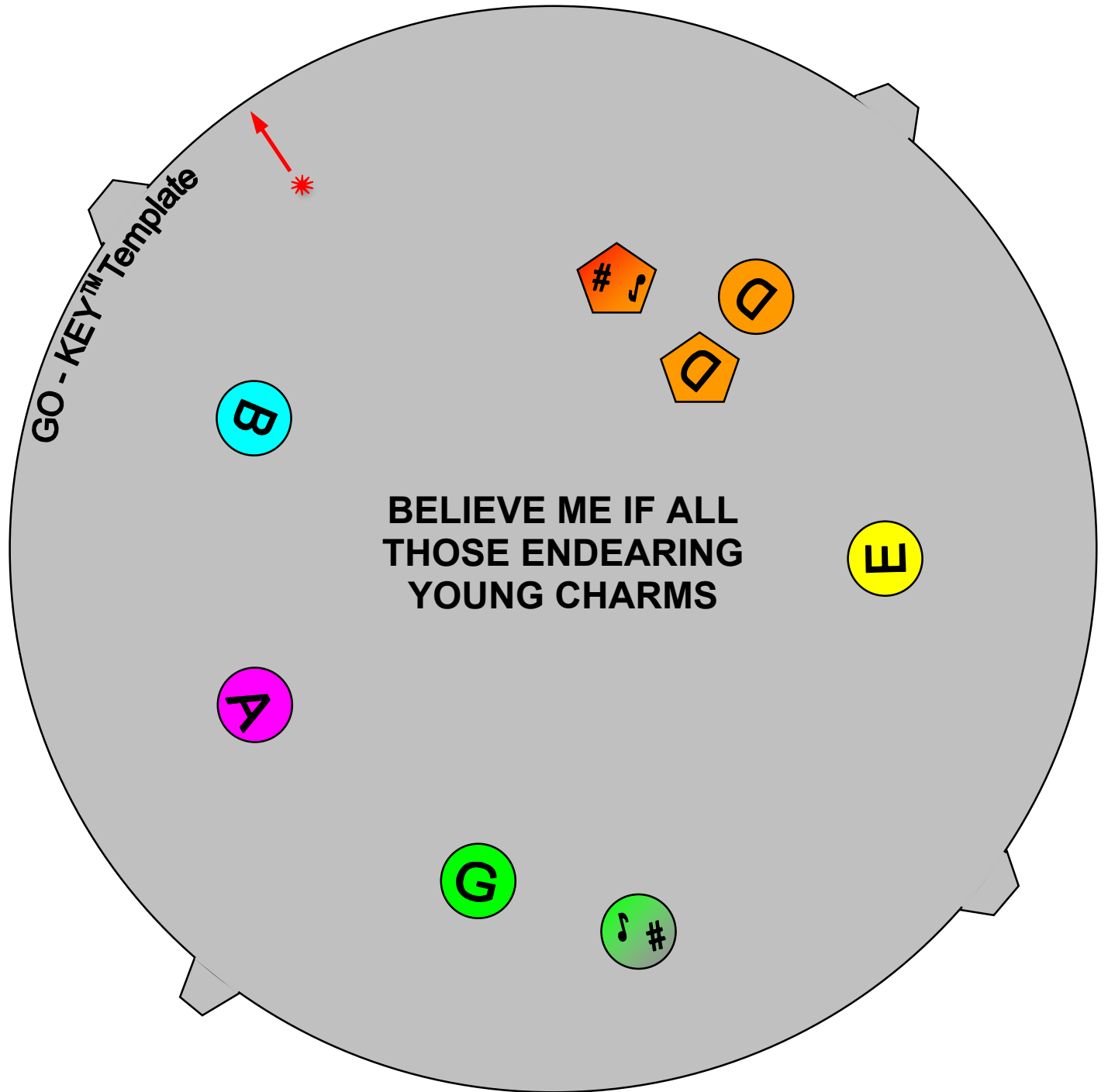
(Published in 1808 in "A Selection of Irish Melodies")

### Verse 1

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,  
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,  
Were to change by to-morrow, and flee from my arms  
Like fairy-gifts, fading away!  
Thou wouldst still be ador'd as this moment thou art,  
Let thy loveliness fade as it will;  
And, around the dear ruin, each wish of my heart  
Would entwine itself verdantly still!

### Verse 2

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,  
And thy cheeks unprofan'd by a tear,  
That the fervour and faith of a love can be known,  
To which time will but make thee more dear!  
No! the heart that has truly lov'd, never forgets,  
But as truly loves on to the close;  
As the sun-flower turns on her god, when he sets,  
The same look which she turn'd when he rose!



## History and Origin

**"Believe Me, if All Those Endearing Young Charms"** is a popular song written in 1808 by Irish poet Thomas Moore using a traditional Irish air. Moore's young wife had been stricken and worried that she would lose her looks. He wrote the words to reassure her. The tune to which Moore set his words is a traditional Irish air, first printed in a London songbook in 1775. It is occasionally wrongly credited to Sir William Davenant, whose older collection of tunes may have been the source for later publishers, including a collection titled *General Collection of Ancient Irish Music*, compiled by Edward Bunting in 1796. Sir John Andrew Stevenson has been credited as responsible for the music for Moore's setting.

It is thought that after Moore's wife, Elizabeth, was badly scarred by smallpox, she refused to leave her room, believing herself ugly and unlovable. To convince her his love was unwavering, Moore composed the 'Endearing' poem which he set to an old Irish melody and sang outside her bedroom door. He later wrote that this restored her confidence and re-kindled their love.

### **Notable Uses:**

- 1935, Little Virgie (Shirley Temple) sings the song to her father (John Boles) in the film *The Littlest Rebel*.
- 1936, The first verse was sung in episode of MGM's *The Little Rascals* entitled *Bored of Education*.
- 1944, The tune, became a staple of Warner Brothers cartoons, appearing first in "Booby Traps".
- 1950, Roger Quilter's setting of the song was included in the *Arnold Book of Old Songs*.
- 1951, In *Merrie Melodies* animated cartoon *Ballot Box Bunny*.
- 1953, Debbie Reynolds and Barbara Ruick sing the first stanza in the film *The Affairs of Dobie Gillis*.
- 1957, Looney Tunes short *Show Biz Bugs* (which reappeared in the 1981 package film).
- 1959, An instrumental version is in the 1963 *Twilight Zone* episode "Passage on the Lady Anne".
- 1961, Bing Crosby included the song in a medley on his album *101 Gang Songs*.
- 1963, *Andy Griffith Show* episode "Rafe Hollister Sings".
- 1965, *Road Runner* cartoon *Rushing Roulette*.
- 1976, In the *Adams Family* "Chapter VIII: John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State".
- 1993, In *Slappy Squirrel's* introductory episode, "Slappy Goes Walnuts", from *Animaniacs*.
- 2010, *South Park* episode "Crippled Summer".