

Blue Moon

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 21 November 2009 15:43 - Last Updated Monday, 16 March 2015 16:20

The moon theme is a gracious one. It's not only poets, that associate it with nice feelings. I believe it is worth, therefore, to present yet another song with the Moon in its title.

Blue Moon.

The authors of this song are **Richard Rodgers** and **Lorenz Hart** who were, in late 1920s, the leading composers of musicals, which were written for the Broadway and London theatres, but this industry was also affected by the Big Crisis of 1929 – 1933. Rogers and Hart turned to Hollywood instead. In 1933 they signed a contract with Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer (MGM). Soon after they received a request to write music for the film *Hollywood Party*.

The film was intended to include many of the studio's biggest stars. Rogers later wrote in his memoirs: *'One of our ideas was to include a scene in which Jean Harlow is shown as an innocent young girl saying - or rather singing - her prayers. How the sequence fitted into the movie I haven't the foggiest notion, but the purpose was to express Harlow's overwhelming ambition to become a movie star ('Oh Lord, if you're not busy up there,/I ask for help with a prayer/So please don't give me the air...')*.

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Jean Harlow

The song was never recorded and the scene from Harlow was never filmed. The song *Prayer* was registered for copyrights but never published.

The film *Hollywood Party* went on screens in 1934. Out of more than ten songs written by Rogers and Hart only three were featured. The cast included Jimmy Durante, Laurel and Hardy, The Three Stooges and Mickey Mouse. The sequence with Mickey Mouse were produced by Walt Disney in Technicolor. The film, however, did not turn out to be a financial success and was not well-received by critics.

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Hart wrote new lyrics to a melody, which was meant to be the main song for the film *Manhattan Melodrama*: '*Act One:/You gulp your coffee and run;/Into the subway you crowd./Don't breathe, it isn't allowed*'. The leading characters were played by Clark Gable, William Powell and Myrna Loy. The director Van Dyke eventually decided no to use this song as the film's (musical theme) but to adapt it for the night club scene. Hart wrote the third version of the lyrics: '*Oh, Lord .../I could be good to a lover,/But then I always*

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discover/The bad in ev'ry man.
Every Man

' The title was *The Bad In*
. It

was sung by Shirley Ross, dressed and made-up to look like a black woman. The song was also published in the written form. However, it did not turn out to be a big hit.



Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart

Rogers still liked his composition, though. The boss of the publishing company MGM Jack Robbins suggested the song needed more popular and commercial character, with a romantic tone and ear-catching title. Lorenz Hart set to work for the fourth time. This time it was a hit. Robbins recommended the song, now titled **Blue Moon**, for a radio programme *Hollywood Hotel*. Soon after *Blue Moon* was the programme's opening song. In January 1935 Columbia Records released the song performed by Connee Boswell. Then at last MGM also came around to appreciate it. Later it was featured in sever films, among them *At the Circus* and *Viva Las Vegas*.

