

Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms

Words & Music:
Traditional Irish

This is an Irish Song of the early 1800s. The melody had been used earlier for the poem "My Lodging it is in the Cold Ground" (whose words were also associated with another tune by Locke). It was first printed in 1737 in London, but is probably much older. There was also a set of Scottish lyrics "I Lo'ed Ne'er a Laddie But Ane". In 1808 Thomas Moore wrote the lyrics that are popular today. There is also a Harvard version of lyrics to the tune, Fair Harvard. It is said Moore wrote the lyrics for the wife of the Duke of Wellington when she suffered facial scars from smallpox, though there is some doubt that this is true, as they were married in 1806, and their relationship was known not to be an affectionate one. Another theory is that Moore wrote it for his own wife. For Warner Bros. animation fans, this is the tune that would be played whenever a piano was rigged to explode. Ever in the key of C, the TNT would go off whenever one hit the high C on "young charms": but, of course, neither Bugs nor anyone else would hit the right note on those two words.

C F
Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,
C G7 C G7
Which I gaze on so fondly today.
C F
Were to change by tomorrow and fleet in my arms,
C G7 C G7
Like fairy gifts fading away.
C F
Though would'st still be adored as this moment thou art.
C Dm E G7
Let thy loveliness fade as it will.
C C7 F
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
F#dim C G7 C
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear.
That the fervor and faith of a soul can be known
To which time will but make thee more, dear.
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets
But as truly loves on to the close.
As the sunflower turns on her god when he sets
The same look which she'd turned when he rose.