

“Fools Rush In” – What I’ll Sing

To: The Piedmont Center for the Arts (PCA)

At our monthly theme concerts at the PCA dedicated to the preservation of the classic jazz trio of piano, bass, and drums, I have been singing some of the “pop” tunes as appropriate. The lyrics to these tunes were written by famous lyricists, and the songs have been sung by many singers. Regardless, I have found some of the lyrics to be offensive, ridiculous, or silly, so I have changed them, including those of “Fools Rush In” which is the subject of this brief writeup.

The PCA now owns these revised and **much sensible** lyrics and owns any performing rights accruing to them.

Bill Jackman, Pianist

“Fools Rush In”

"Fools Rush In" (1940) is a popular song with music by Rube Bloom and lyrics by Johnny Mercer. The major hits at its advent were by the Glenn Miller Orchestra with vocalist Ray Eberle and by the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra with vocalist Frank Sinatra. "Fools Rush In" was also recorded by Billy Eckstine in 1947.

1960's Rebirth

The song was popular with 1960s pop and rhythm and blues artists, resulting in charted remakes by Brook Benton (1960-61), Etta James (1962), and Ricky Nelson (1963). The Ricky Nelson version was an enormous hit, reaching #12 on the Billboard pop chart and #24 on the Hot R&B Singles chart. This recording became the highest charting single version of this song. Elvis Presley recorded the song in 1971 following the Ricky Nelson style.

Composer Rube Bloom, a Polymath

Rube Bloom demonstrated a diverse range of skills and contributions across

various creative and educational fields with levels of knowledge and expertise that qualifies him as a polymath. He was an author, a musician, a songwriter, a highly accomplished pianist, an arranger, a bandleader, and recording artist, producing hit songs and instrumental pieces. In addition to his musical and literary accomplishments, he was involved in government-sponsored tours.

Lyricist Johnny Mercer

Johnny Mercer was one of the most successful songwriters of his time. He wrote the lyrics to more than 1,500 songs, including compositions for movies and Broadway shows. He received nineteen Oscar nominations and won four Best Original Song Oscars. Mercer wrote most of his lyrics in the first half of the twentieth century but continued writing lyrics in the 1960s and into the 1970s.

"Fools Rush In" (1940)

Music by Rube Bloom, lyrics by Johnny Mercer

Original lyrics

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,

And so, I come to you, my love,

my heart above my head.

Though I see the danger there,

If there's a chance for me, then I don't care

Fools rush in where wise men **never go,**

But wise men never fall in love,

So, how are they to know?

When we met, I felt my life begin,

So, open up your heart and let this fool rush in.

Changes to lyrics

When we were rehearsing “Fools Rush In” for our annual Tribute to Harry Warren (Salvatore Antonio Guaragna) at the PCA. I commented to our drummer Albert Brooks, M.D., and to our substitute bassist at the time S. Marshall Perry, Ph.D., that I was averse to singing the lyrics of “Fools Rush In” as is. Johnny Mercer was a famous lyricist, but part of what he wrote for “Fools Rush In” was **ridiculous** although it rhymed, sounded good, and fit the meter.

Specifically, Mercer wrote,

“Fools rush in where wise men never go

But wise men never fall in love,

So, how are they to know?”

I told Al and Marshall that these lyrics rhyme, sound good, and fit the meter, but don't correspond to reality. Al and Marshall are both “wise men” who are judicious. But they went where Johnny Mercer wrote that **“wise men never go”**, they fell in love, although Mercer wrote that **“wise men never fall in love”**, and they got married. Ditto for me. I don't even know what the line **“So, how are they to know?”** is supposed to mean. Al and Marshall are “wise men” with extensive life experience, and **they know** a lot although Mercer wrote **“how are [wise men] to know? “**.

My Revised Lyrics

Please see my revised lyrics below. These changes fit the meter. **Changes are highlighted in red.** Also, my changes retain the end-of-line rhyme of the first and third lines of the second stanza.

fear to **go**,

that they **know**.

My changes only affect three lines in the song but significantly change the meaning of the song.

"Fools Rush In" (1940)

Music by Rube bloom, lyrics by Johnny Mercer

Lyrics **revised** by Bill Jackman

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread,

And so, I come to you, my love,

my heart above my head.

Though I see the danger there,

If there's a chance for me, then I don't care

Fools rush in where wise men **fear to go**,

'Cause wise men are on guard for love,

For reasons that they know.

When we met, I felt my life begin,

So, open up your heart and let this fool rush in.

“Fools Rush In” is one of two “pop” tunes on the concert not by Harry Warren. It is included because it pairs up well in a rumba “pop” medley with “I Only Have Eyes For You,” a 1934 classic by Harry Warren.

This writeup on “Fools Rush In” is posted in the Music section of

<https://jackmanstatistics.com/commentary.html>