

# ***BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS***

Lyrics, Thomas Moore, 1818  
Tune: Traditional Irish Aire

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*"Believe Me, if All Those Endearing Young Charms"* is a popular song written in 1818 by Irish poet Thomas Moore. Moore is said to have written the song for his wife - who feared she had lost her looks. In 1811, Moore married the beautiful actress Elizabeth Dyke. While he was away working in Bermuda, Elizabeth contracted smallpox, which disfigured her face. When Moore returned, she was reluctant to let him see her in her for fear he would no longer love her. Moore responded by writing a love poem, *"Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms"*, which he read to his wife from outside the door. Encouraged by his words that he loved her regardless of her looks, she allowed him back into her room. He later set the words to a traditional Irish air, which is perhaps best known as the alma mater of Harvard University.

Thomas Moore (1779-1852), the son of a prosperous Irish merchant, attended Trinity College in Dublin, and later trained to be a lawyer in London, though he found no satisfaction in this field. He chose, instead, to devote his life to literature. Following his publication of *Irish Melodies* (1807), Moore was dubbed the "Voice of Ireland," comparable to and following in the footsteps of poet Robert Burns (1759-1796) in Scotland. His contribution to hymnody was small, consisting of 32 poems set to Irish tunes, published in *Sacred Songs* (1816). *"Come, ye disconsolate"* is his best known sacred text, published hundreds of times over the years. He was one of the few writers of his day to have made substantial profit from his royalties, though, because of poor business skills, his latter years were spent in poverty.

In music and friendship,

~Tull