

Ne Me Quitte Pas (If You Go Away)

Written by bluelover

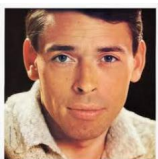
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Ne Me Quitte Pas (If You Go Away)

"Ne me quitte pas" is a Jacques Brel's most beautiful song and is also his most successful. Belgian French-speaker author-composer **Jacques Brel** created and performed a catalog of literate, thoughtful, and theatrical songs that brought him a large, devoted following in France. With a strong power of expression in his lyrics many consider him a poet as well.

Ne Me Quitte Pas (If You Go Away)

Jacques Brel was born in Schaerbeek, Belgium, a small city north of Brussels, on April 8, 1929. He began playing the guitar at the age of 15. In the early 1950s he went to Paris, writing music and singing in the city cabarets and music-halls, where on stage he expressed his songs with grand physical gestures. By 1956 he was touring Europe and he recorded the song *Quand on n'a que l'amour* that brought him his first major recognition. He appeared in a show with Maurice Chevalier and Michel Legrand.



Jaques Brel

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Brel announced his retirement from concert work in 1966, giving a final series of shows in Paris at the Olympia in the fall, but after that he had six months of performances internationally to fulfill. These included appearances in the U.S., where Reprise issued *Encore* and Vanguard Records had *Le Formidable Jacques Brel*.



Jaques Brel

His themes are extremely diverse, exploring love, society and spiritual concerns. His work is not limited to one style. He was as proficient in funny as in heart-breaking ones. In France, Brel's reputation as one of the major singers and songwriters of the 20th century is secure. In the English-speaking world, his influence is limited by the language barrier and by his musical taste in traditional pop and cabaret, rather than the predominant style of the second half of the century, rock.



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Brel himself released the original "**Ne Me Quitte Pas**" in 1958 on his fourth album *La Valse à Mille Temps*.

The song was written after Brel's mistress "Zizou" (Suzanne Gabriello) threw him out of her life. Zizou was pregnant with Brel's child, but Brel refused to acknowledge the child as his own. Zizou later had an abortion due to Brel's actions.



La Valse a Mille Tempd, cover

It is considered by some as "Brel's ultimate classic". He would later say in an interview that the song is not a love song, but rather a song about the cowardice of men.

Ne Me Quitte Pas has been covered in the original French by many artists and has also been translated into and performed in many other languages. A well-known adaptation, with English lyrics by Rod McKuen, is **"If You Go Away"**.



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Jaques Brel - Ne Me Quitte Pas, singel

Included on his album *The Loner and 13 Other Rod McKuen Songs*, "**If You Go Away**" immediately prompted a hit cover version by Damita Jo; Dusty Springfield, Michelle Lee, the Seekers, Al Martino, Jack Jones, Glen Campbell, Frank Sinatra, Tom Jones, Neil Diamond and Julio Iglesias rank among the song's other admirers.



Rod McKuen

McKuen's translation is significantly different to the original Brel lyric. The English version is based around contrasting what would happen "*if you go away*" and what could happen "*if you stay*". In the original French version, the singer begs for his lover not to leave him and is more supplicant and almost self-humiliating (the title "Ne me quitte pas" translates "Do not leave me"). Significant is the last image of the French version; although the McKuen version has lyrics that come close to the original sentiment, the French lyrics are far bleaker.



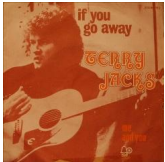
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Terry Jacks scored a worldwide hit with it in 1974. His version was released as a single and reached #29 on the Adult Contemporary chart, #68 on the Billboard Hot 100, and went to #8 in the UK.



Terry Jacks - If You Go Away, single

Ne Me Quitte Pas lyrics

Ne me quitte pas Il faut d'oublier Tout peut s'oublier Qui s'enfuit déjà Oublier le temps Des malentendus Et le temps perdu A savoir comment Oublier ces heures Qui tuaient parfois A coups de pourquoi Le coeur du bonheur Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Moi, je t'offrirai Des perles de pluie Venues de pays Où il ne pleut pas Je creuserai la terre Jusqu'après ma mort Pour couvrir ton corps D'or et de lumière Je ferai un domaine Où l'amour sera roi Où l'amour sera loi Où tu seras reine Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Je t'inventerai Des mots insensé Que tu comprendras Je te parlerai De ces amants-là Qui ont vu deux fois Leur coeur s'embraser Je te raconterai L'histoire de ce roi Mort de n'avoir pas Pu te rencontrer Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas On a vu souvent Rejaillir le feu D'un ancien volcan Qu'on croyait trop vieux Il est parait-il Des terres brûlées Donnant plus de blé Qu'un meilleur avril Et quand vient le soir Pour qu'un ciel flamboie Le rouge et le noir Ne

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*s'épousent-ils pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas
Ne me quitte pas Je ne vais plus pleurer Je ne vais plus parler Je me cacherais là A te
regarder Danser et sourire Et t'écouter Chanter et puis rire Laisse-moi devenir L'ombre de
ton ombre L'ombre de ta main L'ombre de ton chien Ne me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas Ne
me quitte pas Ne me quitte pas*



Ne Me Quitte Pas

If You go away lyrics

*If you go away on this summer day, Then you might as well take the sun away; All the birds
that flew in the summer sky, When our love was new and our hearts were high; When the day
was young and the night was long, And the moon stood still for the night bird's song. If you go
away, if you go away, if you go away. But if you stay, I'll make you a day Like no day has
been, or will be again; We'll sail the sun, we'll ride on the rain, We'll talk to the trees and
worship the wind. Then if you go, I'll understand, Leave me just enough love to fill up my hand,
If you go away, if you go away, if you go away. If you go, as I know you will, you must tell the
world to stop turning Till you return again, if you ever do, for what good is love without loving
you, Can I tell you now, as you turn to go, I'll be dying slowly till the next hello, If you go
away, if you go away, if you go away. But if you stay, I'll make you a night Like no night has
been, or will be again. I'll sail on your smile, I'll ride on your touch, I'll talk to your eyes that I
love so much. But if you go, go, I won't cry, Though the good is gone from the word goodbye,
If you go away, if you go away, if you go away. If you go away, as I know you must, There'll
be nothing left in the world to trust, Just an empty room, full of empty space, Like the empty
look I see on your face. I'd have been the shadow of your shadow If I thought it might have
kept me by your side. If you go away, if you go away, if you go away.*



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