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The 5th dimension one less bell to answer

Ask the publishers to restore access to 500,000+ books. "One Less Bell to Answer" made it No. 2 on the U.S. pop charts in 1970. But The 5th Dimension track feels like it was sourced from a much earlier era, one where heartbreaking torch songs of love lost ruled the day. What is the song about? Who were its writers, and how was it written? And how did a television appearance help the song become a surprise hit? Here is the story of "One Less Bell to Answer," a song where the absence of household chores signifies the devastation left behind by a breakup. The songwriting team of Burt Bacharach and Hal David made the pop charts their personal playground in the '60s. The combination of Bacharach's ingenious, feathery melodic touch and David's sophisticated yet relatable lyrics was simply impossible to deny. Their songs were often covered by soul and R&B artists, with Dionne Warwick being the most famous interpreter of their work on classics like "Walk on By" and "A House Is Not a Home." As it turned out, "One Less Bell to Answer" would help give the duo a springboard hit to start the '70s, even though the song had been kicking around for a few years before that. Its origins are a bit murky, as the two men contradicted each other in interviews about it after the fact. Bacharach claimed his then-wife Angie Dickinson used the title phrase, while David claimed it was someone at a party he was attending. In any case, they both agreed that once David learned of the phrase, he thought it was a fabulous foundation for a sad ballad. Keely Smith recorded it first in 1967, and there was also a version done by Rosemary Clooney the following year. But the big hit version came courtesy of a group that no one at the time would have predicted would be a good fit for it. In the late '60s, The 5th Dimension put together an impressive string of hits that might best be deemed psychedelic soul. Songs like "Stoned Soul Picnic" and "Up, Up and Away" tapped into the flower-power tenor of the times. Still, in Marilyn McCoo, they had a singer who had the chops for sweeping ballads, if only they could find just the right one. Their regular producer Bones Howe presented the group with a series of demos for potential inclusion on their 1970 album Portrait. One of them was "One Less Bell to Answer." The demo was actually performed by Dionne Warwick, which made the band wonder why Warwick hadn't released her own version. In any case, they jumped at the chance to do their own take. Perhaps because it did sort of contradict their normal style, the band didn't choose "One Lass Bell to Answer" as a single, at least not originally. After three singles from the album came and went without much fanfare, they decided to release it after they appeared on an episode of the TV show It Takes a Thief and sang the song. Good move, because the song became one of the biggest hits of their career. The narrator of the song begins by listing all the ways her life should be improved upon the sudden departure of her lover: One less bell to answer / One less egg to fry. But then the facade quickly drops: I should be happy / But all I do is cry. She can't quite break away from the old routine: Though I try to forget, it just can't be done / Each time the doorbell rings, I still run. David's lyrics build in terms of the intensity of the feelings, right in line with Bacharach's melody, which trips effortlessly through different keys while McCoo hangs right with it. It all leads to the inevitable, heartbreaking conclusion that she's lost far more than she's gained in this turn of events: One less man to pick up after / No more laughter / No more love. "One Less Bell to Answer" helped The 5th Dimension pivot away from the groovy late '60s to the soulful early '70s. McCoo's performance is one for the ages, as she takes full advantage of the chance to tackle a song that somehow fell into her and her band's collective laps. When you purchase through links on our site, we may earn an affiliate commission. Photo by Everett/Shutterstock "That title was born from working on "What's New Pussycat?" and Angie Dickinson was living with me [Burt Bacharach - Ed] in London. And a doorbell rang, and I think she made the comment, "One less bell to answer, when I get out of here." It was pretty intense and it bothered her." Burt Bacharach 1970 single by The 5th Dimension "One Less Bell to Answer"Single by The 5th Dimensionfrom the album Portrait B-side"Feelin' Alright?"ReleasedApril 1970Recorded1969-1970GenreEasy listening[1]Length3:31LabelBellComposert(s)Burt BacharachLyricist(s)Hal DavidProducter(s)Bones HoweThe 5th Dimension singles chronology "On the Beach (In the Summertime)" (1970) "One Less Bell to Answer" (1970) "Love's Lines, Angles and Rhymes" (1971) "One Less Bell to Answer" is a song written by Burt Bacharach and Hal David. Originally written in 1967 for Keely Smith, the song was rediscovered in late 1969 by Bones Howe, the producer for the 5th Dimension, and the song was included on the group's 1970 debut album for Bell Records, Portrait. Lead vocals on the single were sung by Marilyn McCoo. "One Less Bell to Answer" was a platinum record. The song peaked at No.2 on the Billboard Hot 100 behind "My Sweet Lord" by George Harrison for the weeks of December 26, 1970 and January 2, 1971.[2][3] On other US charts, it went to No.1 on the Adult Contemporary chart, as well as No.4 on the Best Selling Soul Singles chart. Burt Bacharach and Hal David disagree on the origin of "One Less Bell to Answer". Bacharach told Paul Zollo, the author of Songwriters on Songwriting, that the song was inspired by an incident that occurred with his then-girlfriend, actress Angie Dickinson. "That was kind of a freak that it happened. The title was born from working on 'What's New Pussycat', and Angie Dickinson was living with me in London. A doorbell rang, and I think she made the comment, 'One less bell to answer, when I get out of here.' It was pretty intense, and it bothered her. We weren't married yet but we were living together. I think Hal heard her say, 'One less bell to answer'. He thought, that's a good song title and we wrote it." In the liner notes of Bacharach's "The Look of Love" box set, Hal David described a different inspiration for the song: "Burt and I were in London working on a project, and I was invited to a dinner party. The hostess said to me, 'When you arrive, don't ring the bell, just come in. It'll make one less bell for me to answer.' I was wise enough to know it was a good title!" According to the AFM contract sheets, the following musicians played on the track.[4] Hal Blaine: Drums, percussion Bones Howe Larry Knechtel: Keyboards Joe Osborn: Bass Tommy Tedesco: Guitars Gary Illingworth Fred Tackett: Guitars Jimmy Rowles: Keyboards, Piano Robert Alcivar Bill Holman: Saxophone Sid Sharp William Kurasch Ralph Schaeffer Arnold Belnick Assa Drori Tibor Zelig Bernard Kundell Henry Ferber Robert Konrad Bud Shank: Flute, Alto Saxophone Jim Horn: Saxophone Emil Richards: Vibraphone, Percussion William Hinshaw Jim Decker Richard Perissi Chart (1970-1971) Peakposition Canada RPM Adult Contemporary[5] 7 Canada RPM Top Singles[6] 11 U.S. Billboard Hot 100[7] 2 U.S. Billboard Easy Listening[8] 1 U.S. Billboard Soul Singles[9] 4 U.S. Cash Box Top 100 2 Chart (1971) Rank U.S. Billboard Hot 100[10] 98 U.S. Cash Box [11] 91 Region Certification Certified units/sales United States (RIAA)[12] Platinum 1,000,000^ ^ Shipments figures based on certification alone. The 5th Dimension version of the song was prominently featured at the same time in an episode of the Robert Wagner TV series It Takes a Thief. Bacharach himself included a version of it as the closing number, with Cissy Houston singing, on his own 1971 eponymous A&M album. Rosemary Clooney had a national easy listening chart record of this song in 1968 (US No.34). Barbra Streisand partially covered the song in the medley "One Less Bell to Answer/A House Is Not a Home" on her 1971 album Barbra Joan Streisand. Also in 1971, Rita Reynolds recorded the song for her album Rita Reynolds Sings Burt Bacharach, which won her an Edison Award. Dionne Warwick recorded a version of the song on her 1972 Warner Bros. album Dionne; Bacharach and David produced their track for Warwick. Another 1972 cover was by Shirley Bassey on her album I Capricorn. Vikki Carr, Michael Ball, Vanessa Williams from Everlasting Love (2005), Trijntje Oosterhuis, and Sheryl Crow also have performed covers, and the song (specifically the Streisand medley version) was performed by Matthew Morrison and Kristin Chenoweth in an episode of the American television series Glee. In 2012 Steps covered the song on their album Light Up the World. List of number-one adult contemporary singles of 1971 (U.S.) ^ DeMain, Bill (1997). "Burt Bacharach". In Jones, Dylan (ed.). Ultra Lounge: The Lexicon of Easy Listening. New York: Universe Publishing. p. 33. ^ Billboard Hot 100, Week of December 26, 1970 - Billboard.com. Retrieved December 7, 2018. ^ Billboard Hot 100, Week of January 2, 1971 - Billboard.com. Retrieved May 24, 2023. ^ "One Less Bell To Answer AFM Contract" (PDF). The Wrecking Crew. American Federation of Musicians. Retrieved January 1, 2023. ^ "Item Display - RPM - Library and Archives Canada". Collectionscanada.gc.ca. 1971-01-09. 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For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. 1970 single by the 5th Dimension "One Less Bell to Answer"Single by The 5th Dimensionfrom the album Portrait B-side"Feelin' Alright?"ReleasedApril 1970Recorded1969-1970GenreEasy listening[1]Length3:31LabelBellComposert(s)Burt BacharachLyricist(s)Hal DavidProducter(s)Bones HoweThe 5th Dimension singles chronology "On the Beach (In the Summertime)" (1970) "One Less Bell to Answer" (1970) "Love's Lines, Angles and Rhymes" (1971) "One Less Bell to Answer" is a song written by Burt Bacharach and Hal David. Originally written in 1967 for Keely Smith, the song was rediscovered in late 1969 by Bones Howe, the producer for the 5th Dimension, and the song was included on the group's 1970 debut album for Bell Records, Portrait. Lead vocals on the single were sung by Marilyn McCoo. "One Less Bell to Answer" was a platinum record. 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