

THE GLORY OF LOVE



"The Glory of Love" is a song that was written by Billy Hill and recorded in 1936 by Benny Goodman. Goodman's version was a number one pop hit. The song has been recorded by many artists. It was the signature theme of the 1967 film *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, performed by nightclub singer Jacqueline Fontaine on camera, as well as over the opening and closing credits. Bette Midler included the song in the film *Beaches* (1988) and it appears on the soundtrack.

Billy Hill (July 14, 1899 – December 24, 1940) was an American songwriter, violinist, and pianist who found fame writing Western songs such as "They Cut Down the Old Pine Tree", "The Last Round-Up", "Wagon Wheels", and "Empty Saddles". (*You can find recordings of all of these on YouTube*). Hill's most popular song was "The Glory of Love", recorded by Benny Goodman in 1936, and subsequently by Peggy Lee, Otis Redding, Paul McCartney, and others.

LYRICS

*You've got to give a little, take a little,
and let your poor heart break a little.
That's the story of, that's the glory of love.*

*You've got to laugh a little, cry a little,
until the clouds roll by a little.
That's the story of, that's the glory of love.*

*As long as there's the two of us,
we've got the world and all its charms.
And when the world is through with us,
we've got each other's arms.*

*You've got to win a little, lose a little,
yes, and always have the blues a little.
That's the story of, that's the glory of love.*

The song is about the vagaries of Love: how it is a bitter sweet state. The first line of each verse states an opposite; in the second line is a little sadness then the verse ends with the Glory of Love. The middle eight emphasises that there are two people in love. Who is the song addressed to? On the face of it one person is addressing their loved one directly, but it could be much more introverted with the writer giving themselves a bit of a pep talk or a reminder.

Interpreters of this song have taken all sorts of views. The original 1936 [Benny Goodman](#) recording is fast and joyful; the [Bette Midler](#), in the film *Beaches*, is a young, lighthearted take and the [Paul McCartney](#) is a slow, intimate version.

The structure of the song is very typical with three verses (the last line could be interpreted as a chorus) with a contrasting middle section. Traditionally each verse is eight bars of the same melody and harmony. The middle section is also eight bars long (hence the term: *middle eight*) with a different melody, harmonies and the feel of a different key.

The verse structure is quite fragmented: the first line has two short phrases, the second line a longer phrase then two short phrases for the third line. The middle eight has four equal length phrases.

Jay Althouse's arrangement takes advantage of having more than one person present turning the song into a conversation between the ladies and the gentlemen of the choir. The verses go Ladies, Gentlemen, Together, with the ladies tending to take the more cheerful phrases. The middle eight goes Gentlemen, Ladies together. After presenting the whole lyric Althouse then goes into a short "instrumental break"; the piano plays a version of the tune with the choir imitating a backing band. the middle eight and last verse are repeated followed by a short coda.

The glory of something (Love) is its great beauty or impressive nature; so ultimately this song needs convey that.