

# Elvis Presley – Love Me Tender (1956)

Elvis Presley – [Love Me Tender](#) (1956) Piano Solo arrangement, with [sheet music](#).

'Love Me Tender' is a song by Elvis Presley, published by Elvis Presley Music, adapted from 'Aura Lee' (or 'Aura Lea'), a sentimental Civil War ballad.

It is a sentimental song performed by Elvis Presley, it gives its title to the film Love Me Tender (The Rider of Twilight in French) of which he is the main actor.

The lyrics are by Ken Darby. For contractual reasons, on the version marketed by RCA in 1956, the name of Darby does not appear on the disc nor on the partitions of the time. The song, published by Elvis Presley Music, is co-signed Vera Matson (wife of Ken Darby) and Elvis Presley.



## **ELVIS PRESLEY**

Guitar Chords & Tabs

### **Background and composition**

'Aura Lee' was released in 1861 with music by George R. Poulton and lyrics by W.W. Fosdick. This Civil War song later became very popular among singing clubs and barbershop quartets. It was also sung at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

Elvis Presley performed 'Love Me Tender' on The Ed Sullivan Show on September 9, 1956, shortly before the single's release and about a month before the release of the movie, Love Me Tender, for which the song was originally recorded.

In the days that followed, RCA received a million advance sales requests, causing the song to be certified gold before it was even released. The studio, 20th Century Fox, originally wanted the film to be called The Reno Brothers, but changed it to Love Me Tender to take advantage of the song's popularity.

Hal Wallis, producer of the film, did not allow Presley to be accompanied by his regular band, consisting of Scotty Moore, Bill Black and D.J. fountain. Instead, the soundtrack was provided by The Ken Darby Trio with Red Robinson on drums, Charles Prescott on bass, Vita Mumolo on guitar, and Jon Dodson on vocals, with Presley singing lead vocals only.

The song was credited to Presley and Vera Matson due to a

publishing agreement reached to allocate the royalties, but the primary writer of the song's lyrics was Ken Darby (Matson's husband). The song was published by Elvis Presley Music. Darby also adapted the Civil War tune, which was in the public domain. When asked why he credited his wife with Presley for writing the song, Darby replied, 'Because she didn't write it either.'

Presley was credited for co-writing the song because a publishing deal with Hill & Range required that the authors give 50 percent of the credits for their song if they wanted Presley to record it. Elvis also co-wrote 'You'll Be Gone' and 'That's Someone You Never Forget.' As at the start of his RCA career, Presley took control of the studio, although he was not credited as producer. As with Heartbreak Hotel, he frequently changed the arrangements and lyrics to the point where the original song was almost unrecognizable, thus partially justifying the co-writing credits.

### **Elvis Presley recording**

The song reached number one on the Billboard charts the week of November 3, 1956, and stayed there for 5 weeks, peaking at number 11 in the UK. 'Love Me Tender' also reached number three for three weeks on the R&B charts.

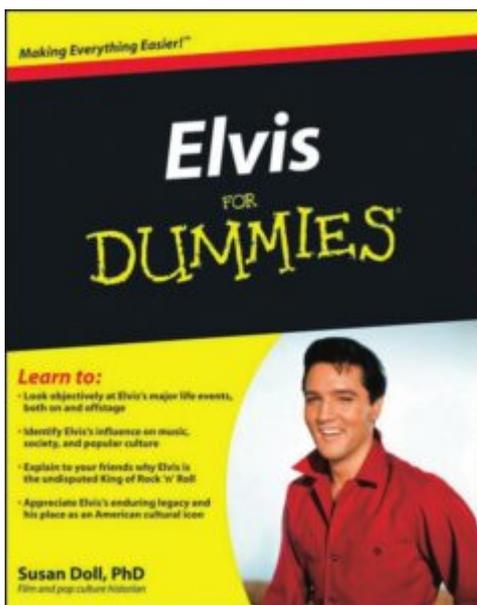
This marked two major events in Billboard history. During that time, Elvis sets another record: the longest consecutive time at number one by an artist—16 weeks—although he was tied by Boyz II Men in 1994 and surpassed by R&B singer Usher in 2004 who spent 19 weeks at the top of the list.

This version was chosen number 437 on Rolling Stone's list of The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time.

In 1968, Presley recorded a 52-second track titled 'Violet (Flower of N.Y.U.)' for the soundtrack of the film The Trouble with Girls. Not released until after Presley's death, the song used the same melody as 'Aura Lee', the song on which 'Love Me

Tender' was based.

Although Presley never re-recorded 'Love Me Tender' in a studio, two live-recorded versions were released on albums after his death: NBC-TV Special (1968) and *Elvis: As Recorded at Madison Square Garden* (1972), with additional performances from concert and television appearances. The song was also performed in the Golden Globe-winning film *Elvis on Tour* (1972).



## Elvis Presley Versions

Love me tender – 2:41 – recorded August 24, 1956

Love me tender – 1:08 – recorded October 1, 1956

Love me tender (unreleased stereo version) – 2:42 – recorded August 24, 1956

The 1997 Jailhouse Rock CD (EP) with bonus tracks contained all three versions.

## Covers by other artists

Della Reese recorded the song in 1983 for the album *Sure Like Lovin' You*.

Richard Chamberlain reached number 21 on the Billboard Pop singles chart with his version when he recorded it as a single in 1962 for MGM.

Percy Sledge hit the Top 40 with a 1967 version, peaking at No. 40 on the Billboard Pop chart, No. 35 on the R&B chart, and No. 35 on the Canadian chart.

B.B. King recorded the song on his 1982 MCA album Love Me Tender.

Linda Ronstadt did the same for Living in the USA.

The Platters recorded it as a single in 1964, Mercury 72359, and on their 1965 album Love Me Tender.

Stuart Sutcliffe performed it with The Beatles, although it was never recorded.

Amy Grant recorded the song for the Honeymoon in Vegas soundtrack in 1992.

Merle Haggard recorded the song for her My Farewell to Elvis album.

The Uruguayan band Trotsky Vengarán recorded a version for their 2002 studio album 'Todo lo Contrario'.

Muslim Magomayev recorded it in 2007.

Ricky Nelson performed the song in an episode of the TV series The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet.

Engelbert Humperdinck recorded the song for his #1 Love Songs of All-Time album.

Norah Jones and Adam Levy did the same for the soundtrack of The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement

James Brown released a version as an A-side single in 1978, 'Have A Happy Day', Polydor 14460, and as a B-side to 'The Spank' with Polydor 14487, as a tribute.

Tony Bennett recorded a version on the 1994 Mercury album It's Now or Never: The Tribute to Elvis Presley.

Frank Sinatra recorded a version in 1960 as a duet with Elvis Presley and in his Trilogy collection in 1980.

Johnny Mathis recorded a version in 2010 on his album Let It Be Me.

Thalía recorded a version in 2010 on the album 'Viva Elvis'.

Mick Ronson covered the song on his 1974 album Slaughter on 10th Avenue.

Annette Peacock covered the song on her 1972 album I'm the One.

Scatman John covered the song for a Japan-exclusive single in 1996, and it was also featured on a compilation called The Best of Scatman John, released in 2002 (Same Japan-exclusive).

Il Divo, the musical crossover group, covered the song with four melodic voices, included on their album Timeless in 2018.