

The Story of... 'Three Little Birds' by Bob Marley



Picture: Island

By Tom Eames (<https://www.smoothradio.com/features/the-story-of/bob-marley-three-little-birds-meaning-lyrics-video/>)

Bob Marley had many classic songs during his relatively short career, but there's one that makes us feel more relaxed than the rest.

'Three Little Birds' was released by Bob Marley and The Wailers in 1977, and remains a beauty to listen to over 40 years later.

Here are all the fascinating facts behind the song:

1. Who wrote 'Three Little Birds'?

Bob Marley wrote this song for his 1977 album *Exodus*.

It was the fourth track on the album, and is often thought to be titled 'Don't Worry About a Thing' or 'Every Little Thing is Gonna Be Alright', due to the repeated use of these phrases in the chorus.

2. 'Three Little Birds' meaning: What is the song about?

Bob Marley's inspiration for the lyrics remains disputed by many.

They are partly inspired by actual birds that Marley loved, that used to fly and sit next to his home.

His long-time friend Tony Gilbert was around at the time he was writing the song and said: "Bob got inspired by a lot of things around him, he observed life. I remember the three little birds. They were pretty birds, canaries, who would come by the windowsill at Hope Road."

However, three female singers from the reggae group I Threes, who did shows with Marley, claim it is actually a reference to them.

I Threes member Marcia Griffiths said: "After the song was written, Bob would always refer to us as the Three Little Birds."

"After a show, there would be an encore, sometimes people even wanted us to go back onstage four times. Bob would still want to go back and he would say, 'What is my Three Little Birds saying?'"

3. How did it perform in the charts?

It wasn't released as a single until 1980, reaching number 17 in the UK.

Despite not reaching the top 10, it became one of Marley's most popular and well-known songs.

4. Who has covered it?

Many artists have covered the song over the years, including:

- Robbie Williams
- Billy Ocean
- Ziggy Marley (Bob's son, for the movie *Shark Tale*)
- Connie Talbot
- Jason Mraz
- Maroon 5

5. It has been used by football fans

In 2015, Plymouth Argyle fans sang the chorus in a playoff match against Wycombe Wanderers. Plymouth were losing 3-0 with 10 minutes to go, but after the fans began singing, Zak Ansah and Jason Banton scored goals and kept their playoff hopes alive.

In 2016, Liverpool fans used it as they followed their team across Europe. Since then, it is often heard at their home games.