

MAGIC PENNY

Moderate; ♩ = approx. 126

words & music by MALVINA REYNOLDS

Chorus: A

Love is some - thing if you give it a - way, _____

give it a - way, _____ give it a - way, _____

To Coda

love is some - thing if you give it a - way, _____ you

end up _____ hav - ing more. _____

Verse: D A

1. It's just _____ like _____ a mag - ic pen - ny: _____

hold it tight _____ and you won't have an - y. _____

Lend it, spend _____ it and you'll have so man - y, they'll

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It consists of three staves. The first staff starts with a B7 chord and the lyrics 'roll all o - ver the floor!'. The second staff starts with an E chord and the lyrics 'end up hav - ing more. Oh,'. The third staff starts with an E chord and the lyrics 'end up hav - ing more.'.

Chorus: For _____

Chorus: D.C. al Coda

2. Money's dandy and we like to use it
 But love is better if you don't refuse it
 It's a treasure and you'll never lose it
 Unless you lock up your door (For)
Chorus

3. So let's go dancing 'til the break of day
 And if there's a piper we can pay
 For love is something if you give it away
 You end up having more (Oh!)
Chorus

Malvina Reynolds



Born with the 20th century, Malvina Reynolds, wrote more than 500 songs and was known as an activist for social justice and the environment. Her songs contain strong political statements couched in humor, gentleness and poetic images.

Reynolds' worldview was strongly shaped in her youth by hearing her socialist immigrant parents discuss politics with their friends. Because her parents opposed U.S. participation in World War I, she was denied her high school diploma. But she went on to receive her B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. in English. She married a labor organizer, took on social causes, and had one child, folksinger Nancy Schimmel. During the Depression, she was unable to get a teaching job but became a social worker and a columnist for the People's World. When World War II began, she worked on an assembly line in a bomb factory and as a tailor. At the age of 45 she began songwriting in earnest after meeting Pete Seeger.

While her first songs were for adults, she gradually began writing more children's songs, although she never felt that she fit the stereotype of a children's performer and songwriter.

"I have a very acid edge toward many aspects of modern life," she noted, "and I'm pretty outspoken about it. I don't mind crossing swords with people when I disagree with them, and I'm not your nice old grandma. However, I always make it clear that the reason I have this sharp cutting edge is because I do care for people. I care about children, and I think the world is ripping them off, taking away their natural environment and much more than that - the natural progression of their tradition - and leaving them stripped, uneasy, uncomfortable and in deep trouble, and it's because of that that I'm so sharp."

Reynolds, who wrote many popular hits sung by other performers in the 1960s, recorded six albums for adults and three for children and kept writing and performing until a few days before her death at the age of 77.

"Magic Penny," a song of peace, hope and love that has become a classic, is an example of Malvina Reynolds' simple style and optimism. This was one of her earlier songs written while her daughter, Nancy Schimmel, was at a junior-high dance. Nancy explains that her mother probably wrote the line "Let's go dancing til the break of day" as a personal wish, since her usual folk-dancing partner was her daughter rather than her husband, who didn't like to dance.