

= True Blue ( Madonna song ) =

" True Blue " is a song by American singer Madonna . It is the title track from her third studio album True Blue ( 1986 ) , and was released as the album 's third single on September 29 , 1986 by Sire Records . Written and produced by Madonna and Steve Bray , the song deals with the feelings of Madonna for her then @-@ husband Sean Penn . A dance @-@ pop song , it features instrumentation from a rhythm guitar , a synthesizer , keyboards , and drums . The main chorus is backed by an alternate one , incorporating a chord progression generally found in doo @-@ wop music .

Received by the critics as a light @-@ hearted and cute retro song , " True Blue " topped the charts in UK , Ireland and Canada and became another consecutive top ten song in U.S. for Madonna by reaching number three on the Billboard Hot 100 . The original music video portrayed her again with a new look , leaner and sporting platinum blond bushy hair . An alternate video was made through the " Make My Video " contest on MTV . The final selected videos had a similar theme of a 1950s @-@ inspired setting and the storyline following the lyrics of the song . " True Blue " has been performed on the Who 's That Girl World Tour ( 1987 ) and the Rebel Heart Tour ( 2015 ? 16 ) .

= = Writing and composition = =

Madonna wrote and produced the song with Steve Bray . According to her , " True Blue " takes its title from a favourite expression of her then husband Sean Penn and to his very pure vision of love and was a direct tribute to him as well as the album , which was as a whole inspired by her " unabashed valentine " for Penn . In an interview , Bray said , " She [ Madonna ] was very much in love . It was obvious if she 's in love she 'll write love songs . If she 's not in love she definitely won 't be writing love songs . " In 2015 , Madonna said that " True Blue " is " a song about true love . I didn 't know what I was talking about when I wrote it . "

" True Blue " is a dance @-@ pop song inspired by the Motown 's girl groups from the 1960s which are considered the direct antecedents of Madonna 's musical sound . The song is composed in the key of B major . It is set in compound quadruple meter , commonly used in doo @-@ wop , and has a moderate tempo of 118 beats per minute . " True Blue " features instrumentation from a rhythm guitar , a synthesizer , keyboards , and drums for the bassline , with a basic sequence of I ? vi ? IV ? V ( B ? G ? m ? E ? F ? ) as its main chord progression .

Madonna 's vocal range spans a bit less than one and a half octaves , from F ? 3 to B4 . The chorus is backed by sounds of bells ringing , an alternate verse ? " This time I know it 's true " ? which is sung by three back @-@ up singers during the interlude , and a bass counter melody which introduces her vocals during the second chorus . The lyrics are constructed in a verse @-@ chorus form , with the theme being Madonna 's feelings for Sean Penn ; it even uses the archaic love word " dear " in the line " Just think back and remember , dear " .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Davitt Sigerson from Rolling Stone magazine in a review of the album True Blue said that the song " squanders a classic beat and an immensely promising title " , LAUNCHcast 's Bill Holdship said that " True Blue " is " Madonna 's wonderful tribute to the late ' 50s / early ' 60s " girl groups " . In his book Madonna : An Intimate Biography , journalist J. Randy Taraborrelli described the song as " the light @-@ hearted , fun track of the whole True Blue album project having a retro 1950 's feel to it " . In the book Rock ' n ' Roll Gold Rush which contains information about various artists and their singles , author Maury Dean said that the song as a " masterwork of simplicity interwoven with secret complexity " adding that " on one hand , it 's just a basic steetcorner ditty , with four basic chords . In another context , it 's a counterpoint harmonic blanket , twirling with star @-@ spangled

timbre and dynamic drive . " Rikky Rooksby , in his book *The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna* , said that " True Blue " is " a song that is merely cute and not really up to being the title track of an album " .

The Wichita Eagle did not like the song , believing that it was " sassless and neutered " as compared to the other songs on the record . However , Daniel Brogan of *The Chicago Tribune* believed the song was good , calling it " impressive " like the rest of the album , and Jan DeKnock of the same paper believed it was " charming " . Steve Morse of *The Boston Globe* , when describing the song , said that it was a " bid to be an ' 80s Helen of Troy " .

= = = Chart performance = = =

" True Blue " was released in the United States in October 1986 . It debuted on the *Billboard* Hot 100 at number 40 , six weeks later it reached its peak of number three , remaining at the position for three consecutive weeks , and spent a total of 16 weeks on the chart . The song performed equally well on the other *Billboard* charts , peaking at number five on *Adult Contemporary* , and number six on the *Hot Dance Club Songs* chart . In October 1986 , the single was certified gold by the *Recording Industry Association of America* ( RIAA ) for shipment of 500 @,@ 000 copies . In Canada , the song debuted at number 84 the *RPM* singles chart on September 27 , 1986 , reached the top for one week in November 1986 , and stayed on the chart for 23 weeks . It ended at the 37th position of the year @-@ end chart .

In the United Kingdom , " True Blue " was released on September 29 , 1986 . It debuted at number three on the *UK Singles Chart* , before climbing to number one the next week , becoming Madonna 's third number @-@ one single there . It was certified gold by the *British Phonographic Industry* ( BPI ) in October 1986 . According to the *Official Charts Company* , the song has sold 545 @,@ 000 copies there . The song peaked at number one for two weeks in October 1986 in Ireland , making it her fourth number @-@ one single on the *Irish Singles Chart* . Both in Australia and New Zealand , the song reached the top five , and was certified platinum in the former region by the *Australian Recording Industry Association* ( ARIA ) for sales of 70 @,@ 000 copies of the single . In Europe " True Blue " also topped the *Eurochart* Hot 100 for one week in October 1986 . It peaked in the top five in Belgium , Italy , and the Netherlands , and in the top ten in Austria , France , Germany , and Switzerland .

= = Music videos = =

= = = Official version = = =

" True Blue " had two music videos to accompany it . Shot in early September 1986 in New York , Madonna 's own video for the song was directed by James Foley , who worked with Madonna in her videos for " *Live to Tell* " and " *Papa Don 't Preach* " , produced by Robert Colesberry and David Massar with photography by Michael Ballhaus . The Foley version features Madonna with three dancers and a 1950s car in an all @-@ blue diner . Madonna changes her hairstyle from short @-@ cropped in " *Papa Don 't Preach* " to a bushy platinum blonde hairdo and sings the song in choreographed moves backed by her dancers . It displays a flashing back to fifties rock 'n'roll youth culture .

The blue background changes to a sunny one as she sings " The sun is bursting right out of the sky " to go @-@ along with the lyrical meaning of the song . Two of Madonna 's close friends , Erika Belle and Debi Mazar appear in the video . The video was released at a time when she was going through a failed marriage with then husband actor Sean Penn . During this period , Madonna focused on more traditional fashion and attitudes and tried to appear more respectful of traditional gender roles . After shedding her trampy sex @-@ kitten and boy @-@ toy image with the " *Live to Tell* " music video , Madonna again adopted a new look for this video . Madonna attended aerobics classes at Hollywood health centre *The Sports Connection* , which was responsible for her toned

down look in the video .

= = = " Make My Video " contest = = =

Sire Records decided to opt for a promotional device in the United States that would involve MTV viewers to make their own videos for " True Blue " . In the fall of 1986 , MTV asked its viewers to submit their own videos . The contest was known as " Madonna 's ' Make My Video ' Contest " . The winner was awarded a trip to MTV 's New York studio where Madonna presented a \$ 25 @, @ 000 check live on MTV . Thousands of viewers submitted their recorded tapes which were mainly made using home @-@ made video equipment and featured themselves or relatives as the actors . MTV publicist Peter Danielson said that many of the submissions featured teenagers imitating Madonna . All the entries were shown in a continuous run on MTV as promised . The same song was played over and over for the whole day , but each time with a different video made by the finalists . Author Lisa A. Lewis said that this event emphasized the effect Madonna had on different kind of audiences due to the popularity and response to the contest . MTV selected ten finalists based mainly on a standard of popularity rather than slickness of production or concept creativity .

The concepts used in the videos were wide ranging and included a number of different ideas to interpret the lyrical meaning of the song . The final three entries selected , portrayed a fifties @-@ style production referring to the thematic content of the song . The song 's narration about " True Love " formed the basis of the rest of the semi @-@ finalist videos but was used in very different ways . The videos were choreographed featuring heterosexual romance , though no particular male or female protagonist was singled out . Some even adopted a kind of literal montage technique rather than structuring the video around a narrative line .

The winning entry was by Angel Gracia and Cliff Guest and it showed the female protagonist ( played by the director 's sister Anabel Garcia ) being supported and guided by her girlfriends who introduce her with the male protagonist . The girl even goes to the boy 's door to gift him flowers , thereby reversing the usual gender @-@ directed pattern of gift @-@ giving . The male protagonist is portrayed as a " perfect boy " ( played by William Fitzgibbon ) having the sensibilities like attentiveness , cuteness , playfulness like a friend ( after the lyrics " You 're my best friend " ) and not sexual overtones . The video in @-@ turn contrasts him with a self @-@ centered boy who puts on sunglasses , throws his leather jacket over his shoulder and walks away from the girl . Other videos portrayed a girl pining for her sailor , U.S.-Soviet relations and an arguing couple with the girl in a scene inspired by the music video of Tina Turner 's 1984 single " What 's Love Got to Do with It " .

= = Live performances = =

Madonna first performed the song on her 1987 " Who 's That Girl World Tour " . She came up on the stage wearing a blue dress to sing the song after finishing a performance of " Lucky Star " . In a similar setting to the original music video of the song , Madonna is backed up by her singers who play her girlfriends . At the end of the song Madonna is asked to dance again by the dancer playing her man in the performance . Her dance in the performance ( and also some other performances in the tour ) was choreographed by Jeffrey Hornaday from Flashdance . Two different performances of the song on the tour were included on two live video releases : Who 's That Girl : Live in Japan , filmed in Tokyo , Japan , on June 22 , 1987 , and Ciao Italia : Live from Italy , filmed in Turin , Italy , on September 4 , 1987 .

Madonna did not perform the song again until 2015 , as part of her Rebel Heart Tour . She performed an acoustic , ukulele @-@ driven version of the song sitting on top of a tire stack while asking the crowd to sing along with her . Writing for the Daily News , Jim Farber felt that during the performance " [ Madonna ] emphasized a rare sincerity " while Jordan Zivitz from the Montreal Gazette opined that " it was both endearingly quaint and , supersized by an unprompted singalong from more than 16 @, @ 000 voices , a goosebumps moment that felt more grandiose in its way than the showpieces surrounding it " . Newsday 's Glenn Gamboa gave a similar feedback , saying

that the " lovely acoustic version of " True Blue " was a rare bow to romance , the sweetest of Madonna sentiments " .

= = Formats and track listing = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Madonna ? lyrics , producer , vocals  
Steve Bray ? drums , keyboards , lyrics , producer  
Bruce Gaitsch ? rhythm guitar  
Fred Zarr ? additional keyboards  
Steve Peck ? engineer  
Shep Pettibone ? remixing  
Herb Ritts ? photography  
Jeri McManus ? design / artwork  
Credits adapted from the album 's liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =