

# Bohemian Rhapsody - Queen (1975)

Watch the video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ9rUzIMcZQ&ab\\_channel=QueenOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJ9rUzIMcZQ&ab_channel=QueenOfficial)

*Bohemian Rhapsody* is a song by the British rock band **Queen**.

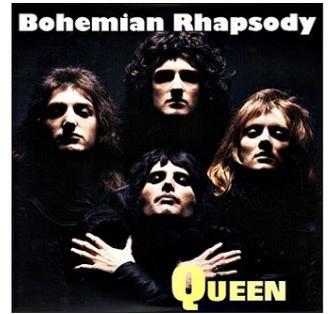


It was written by **Freddie Mercury** for the band's 1975 album *A Night at the Opera*.

Do you know the band and their songs?

Name two interesting facts about the group/it's members.

Which is your favourite Queen song?



## Explanations for the lyrics

*Scaramouch: a clown*

*Fandango: a lively Spanish dance*

*Bismillah: the opening word in the Koran (literally: in the name of Allah)*

*Beelzebub: one of the many names given to the devil.*

A. Match the words to their definitions, then use the words to complete some of the gaps in the lyrics. You may need to change the words slightly.

landslide	a. The feeling of being sorry for someone who is in a bad situation
fantasy	b. There's no reason to worry about it
Easy come, easy go	c. A sudden fall of a lot of earth down a hill, cliff, etc.
It doesn't (really) matter	d. What actually happens or is true
reality	e. based on imagination and not facts
sympathy	f. Used when something, especially money, was easily obtained and is quickly used or spent

Is this the real life?

Is this just .....?

Caught in a .....

No escape from .....

Open your eyes

Look up to the ..... and see

I'm just a poor boy, I need no .....

Because I'm .....

A little high, little low

Anyway the wind blows, ..... to me, to me

To throw it all away	a.To continue doing
To not mean to do something	b.To get rid of everything
To pull the trigger	c.To not want to do something
To carry on	d.To shoot somebody

Mama, just ..... a man  
.....a gun against his head  
..... my ....., now he's dead  
Mama, life ..... just .....

But now I've gone and .....

Mama, ooo  
Didn't ..... to make you cry  
If I'm not back again this time tomorrow  
....., ....., as if nothing really matters

Something aches	a.To shake slightly because you are cold or frightened
spine	b.To decide to accept a reality
A shiver	c.backbone
To be born (I was born)	d.A continuous, but not sharp pain somewhere in your body
To face the truth	The moment you enter the world as a baby

..... late, my time has come  
Sends ..... down my .....

Body's ..... all the time  
Goodbye everybody - I've got to go  
Gotta leave you all behind and.....  
Mama, ooo - (anyway the wind blows)  
I don't want to die  
I sometimes wish I'd never be born.....

frightening	a.a flash of lightning and the sound of thunder together
thunderbolt	b.A dark image, shadow, or shape
A silhouette	c.A lightning bolt or bolt of lightning is a particular flash of bright light seen in the sky.
Lightning (bolt)	d.Scary, terrifying

I see a little ..... of a man  
Scaramouch, scaramouch will you do the fandango  
..... and ..... - very very ..... me  
Galileo, Galileo,  
Galileo, Galileo,  
Gallileo Figaro - magnifico

To have something put aside for somebody/something	a. Something large and ugly
A monstrosity	b. To stop holding sb or sth
To let somebody/something go	c. Kept to be used later

But I'm just a poor boy and nobody loves me  
 He's just a poor boy from a poor family  
 ..... him his life from this .....

Easy come easy go - will you .....

Bismillah! No - we will not let you go - let him go  
 Bismillah! We will not let you go - let him go  
 Bismillah! We will not let you go - let me go  
 Will not let you go - let me go (never)  
 Never let you go - let me go  
 Never let me go - ooo  
 No, no, no, no, no, no, no -  
 Oh mama mia, mama mia, mama mia let me go  
 Beelzebub has a devil put aside for me  
 for me  
 for me

Gotta do	a. Get out of someplace
To stone somebody	b. Have to do
To spit at sb/sth	c. A punishment where rocks are thrown at sb until they are dead
To get outta someplace	d. To force a small amount of saliva out of your mouth

So you think you can ..... me and ..... in my eye  
 So you think you can ..... me and ..... me to .....

Oh baby - can't do this to me baby  
 Just .....get out - just ..... right..... here  
 Ooh yeah, ooh yeah  
 Nothing really matters  
 Anyone can see  
 Nothing really matters - nothing really matters to me

Anyway the wind blows...



*B. Read part of the entry from Wikipedia about the song and decide if the sentences that follow are true or false.*

**Bohemian Rhapsody** is a song by the British rock band Queen. It was written by Freddie Mercury for the band's 1975 album *A Night at the Opera*. The song is a six-minute suite, notable for its lack of a refraining chorus and consisting of several sections: an intro, a ballad segment, an operatic passage, a hard rock part and a reflective ending part. "Bohemian Rhapsody" is one of the few songs to emerge from the 1970s progressive rock movement to achieve widespread commercial success and appeal to a mainstream audience.

### Lyrics

Mercury refused to explain his composition other than to say it was about relationships; the band is still protective of the song's secret. Brian May supports suggestions that the song contained veiled references to Mercury's personal traumas. He recalls "Freddie was a very complex person: flippant and funny on the surface, but he concealed insecurities and problems in squaring up his life with his childhood. He never explained the lyrics, but I think he put a lot of himself into that song."

*It's one of those songs which has such a fantasy feel about it. I think people should just listen to it, think about it, and then make up their own minds as to what it says to them... "Bohemian Rhapsody" didn't just come out of thin air. I did a bit of research although it was tongue-in-cheek\* and mock opera. Why not?*  
Freddie Mercury

Despite this, critics, both journalistic and academic, have speculated over the meaning behind the song's lyrics. Some believe the lyrics describe a suicidal murderer haunted by demons or events just preceding an execution. Other critics interpreted the lyrics as Mercury's way of dealing with personal issues. Music scholar Sheila Whiteley observes that Mercury reached a turning point in his personal life in the year he wrote "Bohemian Rhapsody". Still others believe the lyrics were only written to fit with the music, and have no meaning; the DJ, television entertainer and comedian Kenny Everett quoted Mercury as claiming the lyrics were simply "random rhyming nonsense".

When the band released a *Greatest Hits* cassette in Iran, a leaflet in Persian was included with translation and explanations. In the explanation, Queen state that "Bohemian Rhapsody" is about a young man who has accidentally killed someone and, like Faust, sold his soul to the devil. On the night before his execution, he calls for God saying, "Bismillah" ("In the name of God" in Arabic), and with the help of angels, regains his soul from Shaitan (the devil in Islam).

\* *tongue in cheek* (adj) *ironic, flippant, or insincere*

Adapted from: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bohemian\\_Rhapsody](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bohemian_Rhapsody)

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|--|------|-------|
| 1. The song is a mix up of different musical genres.   | True | False |
| 2. According to the article the song was about Mercury's personal experiences.   | True | False |
| 3. Mercury claimed he'd done extensive research for the song.  | True | False |
| 4. Journalists and academics seem to agree on the interpretation of the lyrics.  | True | False |
| 5. The song is inspired by Faust and Islam.  | True | False |
| 6. Queen included a leaflet with explanations and translations in Persian in every copy of their <i>Greatest Hits</i> album. | True | False |

*C. Freddie Mercury said about the song that "It's one of those songs which has such a fantasy feel about it. I think people should just listen to it, think about it, and then make up their own minds as to what it says to them..."*

***Listen to the song again and write your own interpretation of the lyrics. What do you think happened? (120-180 words)***