

Throwback: Joni Mitchell-*Help Me*



Joni Mitchell wrote “Help Me” for her sixth studio album, *Court and Spark*. The folk singer-songwriter tapped into her jazz influences and recorded the song with Tom Scott’s L.A. Express Band. Mitchell sang about falling in love with a ladies’ man and not being able or wanting to pull away from him. The singer’s amiable mezzo-soprano sounded beautifully vulnerable with the band and Larry Carlton’s expressive guitar playing. “Help Me” was Mitchell’s big radio hit, making it to the Top Ten on the Billboard 100 chart in 1974 and sitting at number one on the Easy Listening chart. The critics and public fully embraced the album, and it won The Village Voice Paz & Jop critics poll in 1974. There were Grammy nominations for Album of the Year, and “Help Me” was nominated for Song of the

Year and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance. Court and Spark is Mitchell's best-selling album and one of the most renowned and referenced albums in pop music history. Chaka Khan, Prince, Wynonna, Divine Brown, Mandy Moore, and Katherine McPhee have all covered "Help Me." The rap group P.M. Dawn sampled the tune in "Looking Through Patient Eyes," Prince cites it in "The Ballad Of Dorothy Parker." Joni Mitchell's 19th album, *Shine*, released in 2007, is her final recording. In 2021, she received the Kennedy Center Honors for a lifetime of achievement. She was named the Gershwin Prize winner by the Library of Congress in 2023. In October of 2023, the singer made a surprise appearance at a Brandi Carlile show and performed three of her songs; "Shine," "Ladies Of The Canyon," and "Circle Game" with Carlile and Annie Lennox.