

He's So Fine



The Chiffons

written by Ronnie Mack

In 1961, the New York vocal group the Tokens had a million-seller "The Lion Sleeps Tonight". It led to a ten record deal with Capitol Records—not for recording, but for producing! The Tokens set up their own office in New York City and produced nine records. They all flopped. There was only one more record left in their deal.

Meanwhile, a young songwriter named Ronnie Mack who lived in the housing projects in the Bronx overheard a quartet of girls singing in his high school lunchroom. He liked their voices and asked them if they'd record a demo of some of his tunes. They thought it was a great idea so they went and sang for an hour. The Studio cost: \$25.

The girls graduated from high school and all got day jobs. "They were working as phone operators". Mack went knocking on music publishers' doors, carrying his book full of songs and his demos. The Tokens had an office at 1697 Broadway. One day, this fellow named Ronnie Mack—I don't know how he heard of us—came up to our office. He came up with a notebook with all these amazing songs in it. They had the most incredible lyrics: not intellectual lyrics, but just the things that people speak of in everyday language. "He's So Fine" was one of the songs." And he had this group, the Chiffons. So we took them in studio and recorded "He's So Fine". It didn't open with "Doo-lang, doo-lang" at first. It was just in the background. But the engineer, a guy named Johnny Cue said, "Why don't you start the song like that?" We thought it was a terrific record and brought it to Capitol, as the last song of our deal.

The president of Capitol turned it down. He said, "We don't like the record. It's too trite, it's too simple." So our deal with Capitol records was over. We took "He's So Fine" to ten record companies. Ten companies turned it down. The eleventh was a little company called Laurie Records. We played it and they locked the doors and said, "You're not getting out of here. We want that record." Of course, we'd already been turned down by ten companies- if they had offered us eighty cents, we'd have given them the record.

The record was released in February 1963. Two months later, it was #1 in America. The brilliant 25-year-old composer, Ronnie Mack, died of Hodgkins disease shortly after "He's So Fine" became a hit. He was already in the hospital when he received his gold record. The Tokens were the musicians on the record.

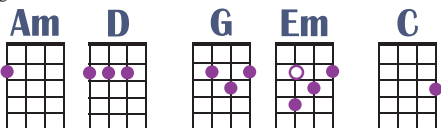
Am D Am D
 do-lang-do-lang-do-lang do-lang-do-lang
 He's so fine do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Wish he were mine do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 That handsome boy over there do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 The one with the wavy hair do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 I don't know how I'm gonna do it do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 But I'm gonna make him mine do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 He's the envy of all the girls do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 It's just a matter of time do-lang-do-lang

Am D
 He's a soft spoken guy do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Also seems kinda shy do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Makes me wonder if I do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Should even give him a try do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 But then I know he can't shy do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 He can't shy away forever do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 And I'm gonna make him mine do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 If it takes me forever do-lang-do-lang

C
 He's so fine oh yeah Gotta be mine oh yeah
 G
 Sooner or later oh yeah I hope it's not later oh yeah
 C
 We got to get together oh yeah The sooner the better oh yeah
 D
 I just can't wait, I just can't wait To be held in his arms

Am D
 If I were a queen do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Am D
 And he asked me to leave my throne do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Am D
 I'd do anything that he asked do-lang-do-lang-do-lang
 Am D
 Anything to make him my own do-lang-do-lang-do-lang

G
 For he's so fine So fine
 Em G Em G
 So fine so fine he's so fine so fine so fine so fine he's so fine so fine
 Em G Em G
 oh yeah he's so fine he's so fine so fine uh-huh he's so fine he's so fine....



Ukulele Club of Santa Cruz
 DooWop Night August 2005