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# Siniy Platochek, Blue Kerchief, Синий платочек



The music to this famous Soviet and Russian song was written in 1939 by the Polish conductor and composer Jerzy Petersburskiy (1895-1979).

In September of the same year, Petersburskiy had been drafted into the army, after the German attack on Poland. In the same month already he found himself on Soviet territory, together with a large number of his fellow tribesmen. After having received the Soviet citizenship, still in the year 1939, he headed "Blue Jazz", a State Jazz Orchestra of the Belorussian Soviet Republic. The band consisted of 25 people, almost all Polish musicians.

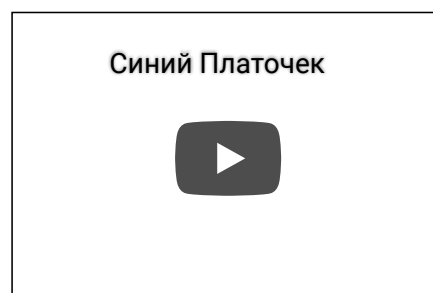
They had a lot of good songs and dance tunes in their program, and amongst them - Blue Kerchief composed by Jerzy Petersburskiy.

In 1940 "Blue Jazz" toured in Moscow, where they performed in the Moscow Hermitage Theatre. One of these performances was attended by the Russian poet and playwright Yakov Galitskiy (1890-1963), who was touched by the sound of Petersburskiy's waltz. While the orchestra was playing he wrote some lines down about a blue modest kerchief, which he did show after the concert to the composer. Petersburskiy liked Galitskiy's text very well, and only a couple of days later, the song with the full text written by Galitskiy was performed by the orchestra's soloist Stanislav Landau.

Already soon after this first performance the song became extremely popular. Well-known performers, such as Vadim Kozin, Mikhail Garkavi, Lidia Ruslanova, Ekaterina Yurovskaya, Isabella Yuryeva included The Blue Kerchief in their repertoire, while the very first records were made of the performances by the songstress Yurovskaya and the singer Vadim Kozin. Typical for these records though, is that the text was sung according to the performers' own wish, instead of using the pure Galitskiy's text. Anyhow, no matter what text, The Blue Kerchief became one of the most famous songs of the pre-war period.

The outbreak of the war, did not cause the popularity of The Blue Kerchief to fade. On the contrary: already in the first days of the war, the Russian poet Boris Kovinev had written a new text to the song. On June 29th, 1941, the song "Farewell" sounded on the radio. The final lines of this version were sung by Lydia Ruslanova, on the recording that she made in April 1942. This version of Kovyniov became a "carriage" one, performed in railway carriages in the post-war time by invalids and beggars, under the harmonics accompaniment. It is remembered till now and is composed in the style of the "urban romance".

## Claudia Shulzhenko and Siniy Platochek



Even the prewar version of "Blue Kerchief" lived together with the Soviet soldiers since the first war days of 1941, as a poet A. Surkov wrote. There were many variants of the text, after the beginning to its rearrangement had been laid by Kovyniov. Lidia Ruslanova, a famous folk-style songstress, performed the song at the front with a changed ending and made a recording in 1942.

The third and most popular version of the song appeared also in 1942, after the songstress Claudia Shulzhenko performed with her ensemble in the guards division of General Gagen before the defenders of the legendary "road of life" through the Lodega Lake. As she was asked by the s perform it, though she only liked the melody. After her the lyrics written by Galitskiy meant nothing s war with fascism. On this purpose she contacted the young journalist Mikhail Maximov. This young

poet was not very experienced, but he had fought in the first Mountain-Rifle Brigade, as an assistant to the commander of an artillery and machine-gun battalion, and immediately he understood what the songstress had in mind. Immediately he began working on a new text for the song, and by morning he got it ready. This was the morning of April 9th, 1942.

Claudia Shulzhenko loved the new lyrics and added "The Blue Kerchief" to her permanent repertoire, where it became the most recognizable, and most popular song. As "The Blue Kerchief" had contributed most to Claudia's popularity, after she died the sign of the blue kerchief was added to her tombstone.



The first performer of the song, who came to London in the run of the WWII and stood there, having changed his name to Stanley Laudan, recorded his version of the song in 1958 in English. In 1975 he organized a concert of the British group "The Dooley Family" in Moscow and arrived there also. After the concert, Laudan came out to the stage and performed Blue Kerchief in Russian, 35 years after the very first performance. A [record](#) of the concert was made and issued.

The daughter of lieutenant Maksimov and the son of Claudia Shulzhenko [issued a book](#) about Maksimov and the role he played in the composition of the song.

**The performers:** Ekaterina Yurovskaya, Izabella Yurjeva, Vadim Kozin, Lidiya Ruslanova, Claudia Shulzhenko

Among the modern performers: Tatyana Bulanova, Nyusha, Taisiya Povaliy, Ani Lorak, Alsou, Elena Vaenga, Zhanna Aguzarova, Yulia Savicheva, Tina Karol, Tamara Gverdsiteli

### SCORES FOR ACCORDION: SIMPLE, WITH VARIATIONS

Russian Text	Transliteration	English Text
Синенький скромный платочек Падал с опущенных плеч. Ты говорила, что не забудешь Ласковых, радостных встреч.	Sinenkij skromnyj platochek Padal s opushchennyh plech Ty govorila chto ne zabudesh Laskovyh radostnyh vstrech	Your plain blue and modest kerchief Down the dropped shoulders fell. You said that always you would remember Our joyful dates well.
Порой ночной Мы распрощались с тобой... Нет больше ночек! Где ты платочек, Милый, желанный, родной?	Poroy nochnoj My rasproshchalis s toboj Net bolshe noчек Gde ty platochek Milyj zhelannyj rodnoj	The time was high, We told each other "goodbye!" No night dates more! The kerchief waits for My loving and kindred eye!
Помню, как в памятный вечер Падал платочек твой с плеч, Как провожала и обещала Синий платочек сберечь.	Pomnyu kak v pamyatnyj vecher Padal platochek tvojs plech Kak provozhala i obeshchala Sinij platochek sberech	I still remember the night when You waved the kerchief with verve How you saw off, took the blue one off, Promising it to preserve.
И пусть со мной Нет сегодня любимой, родной, Знаю, с любовью ты к изголовью Прячешь платок голубой.	I pust so mnoj Net segodnya lyubimoj rodnoj Znayu s lyubovyu ty k izgolovyu Pryachesh platok goluboj	When I have got No beloved on the spot I know you spread, over the bedhead, The kerchief blue with love hot.
Письма твои получая, Слышу я голос живой. И между строчек синий платочек Снова встает предо мной.	Pisma tvoi poluchaya Slyshu ya golos zhivoj I mezhdru strochek sinij platochek Snova vstaet predno mnoj	Getting your letters, I hear Your live voice which they contain. I kiss each your leaf and the blue kerchief Rises before me again.
И часто в бой Провожает меня облик твой, Чувствую, рядом с любящим взглядом Ты постоянно со мной.	I chasto v boj Provozhaet menya oblik tvojs Chuvstvuyu ryadom s lyubyashchim vzglyadom Ty postoyanno so mnoj	In fighting trim, How You see off, I dream, Feeling your dear glance always near, This presence gives me more vim.
Сколько заветных платочков Носим в шинелях с собой! Нежные речи, девичьи плечи Помним в страде боевой.	Skolko zavetnyh platochokov Nosim v shinelyah s soboj Nezhnye rechi devichi plechi Pomnim v strade boevoj	Many of such cherished kerchiefs We carry always with us! The tender speeches, hair she pleaches, In war we recollect thus.
За них, родных, Желанных, любимых таких, Строчит пулеметчик за синий платочек, Что был на плечах дорогих.	Za nih rodnyh Zhelannyh lyubimyh takih Strochit pulemetchik za sinij platochek Chto byl na plechah dorogih	Each soldier`s shell Lets the beloved safely dwell, The machine-gunner keeps like a banner Her shoulder blue kerchief well.

## Sources:

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[Back to previous page](#)