

MATTHEW HAWK MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS

The story behind the song



Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas has always been my favorite Christmas song. I used to play it the way many others played it; upbeat, fun, cheerful.

But then, Christmas of 2019 came along, and my life was forever changed. My son, Dawson, was born just after Thanksgiving, and his mother developed a rare condition and almost died giving birth to him. Had we not been at one of the best hospitals for women in the US, she wouldn't have survived. The room looked like a war zone, and I sent out a prayer request on social media, with hundreds of people praying. I really believe that's what saved her life. My son had a rare heart condition and had several heart malformations. He needed three open-heart surgeries just to survive. Again, it was many prayer warriors that made his surgeries successful.

My wife and I rented a six hundred square foot apartment for the three of us during all of this, as close to the children's hospital as we could be. But the apartment would be nothing but boxes through the holidays. No Christmas decorations. No extended family Christmas. Just us, celebrating the best gift—the gift of life. Blessed that our Dawson was still alive, and that's all that mattered to us. No tree or gifts needed.

I came up with this version of Merry Little Christmas to express the somber, scared, version of me, watching my wife in ICU and my son in CICU. It was probably the scariest time of my life, and this version reflects that. It wasn't until I recorded it that I realized, the original songwriters intended it to be a sad, somber ballad. And yet, it has transformed to be a joyful song over the years.

I hope my version speaks to you. I hope you can feel the sadness and yet, joy-infused melancholy at the same time. There was hope. Have yourself a merry little Christmas.