

= Picture to Burn =

" Picture to Burn " is a song recorded by American singer @-@ songwriter Taylor Swift . It was co @-@ written by Swift and Liz Rose , and produced by Nathan Chapman . It was released on February 3 , 2008 by Big Machine Records as the fourth single from Swift 's eponymous studio album , Taylor Swift (2006) . It was inspired by the narcissistic and cocky nature of her former high school classmate and ex @-@ boyfriend Jordan Alford with whom Swift never established a formal relationship . In retrospect , Swift has stated that she has evolved on a personal level and as a songwriter , claiming she processed emotions differently since " Picture to Burn " . The song was chosen as a single based on the audience 's reaction to it in concert . Musically , the track is of the country rock genre with prominent usage of guitar , banjo , and drums . The lyrics concern setting fire to photographs of a former boyfriend .

" Picture to Burn " was praised by music critics , some who supported the feminist message . The single was commercially successful , peaking at number 28 on the Billboard Hot 100 and at number three on the country @-@ genre chart . It was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and has sold over one million downloads . In Canada , it charted within the top 50 and was certified gold . The music video for " Picture to Burn " was directed by Trey Fanjoy and features Swift fantasizing about taking revenge on her ex @-@ boyfriend after she discovers him with another woman . The video also has Swift and her band performing with pyrotechnics as a backdrop . Swift promoted " Picture to Burn " via live performances , including numerous while supporting as opening act for various country artists ' concert tours . It was also performed on her first headlining tour , the Fearless Tour (2009 ? 10) .

= = Background = =

" Picture to Burn " was inspired by her high school boyfriend , now firefighter , Jordan Alford with whom Swift did not establish a formal romantic relationship . She was his classmate at Hendersonville High School in Tennessee and they went out before he dated classmate Chelsea who would later become his wife . " ' They dated in freshman year , but then after that , girl code , once you date an ex @-@ boyfriend you 're not friends anymore . Picture To Burn is about him . Because he 's always had big old trucks and stuff , ' Taylor Swift said . She was frequently frustrated by his narcissistic and cocky nature , and decided to write a song about how she felt at her after school job , writing songs for Sony / ATV Music . It was co @-@ written with Liz Rose on guitar , and given a comedic edge (an idea of Swift 's) . Swift found herself sitting , playing her guitar , and saying , " I hate his stupid truck that he doesn 't let me drive . He 's such a redneck ! Oh my God ! " , a line that was ultimately developed into the song 's chorus . Swift described it as brutally honest , and cited it as an example of how she expresses herself if someone leaves her heartbroken , offends her , or is hostile towards her . Furthermore , she said " Picture to Burn " became the only song driven by anger on Taylor Swift , a topic she felt most teenage females could identify to . " It 's OK to be mad after a breakup or after something goes wrong with a relationship " , Swift said . The subject of " Picture to Burn " remains unaware that he is the inspiration behind the song . The song was chosen as a single based on the reactions it garnered at concerts . Swift recalled that , although " Tim McGraw " (2006) was her only single at the time she began opening for Rascal Flatts ' Me and My Gang Tour (2006 ? 07) , " Picture to Burn " was the performance in which the crowd seemed to be the most enthusiastic with most screaming it " at the top of their lungs " .

In retrospect , Swift has stated that the song was something typical of her to say in her teenage years and that it exemplified how she processed emotion at the time , adding " I didn 't know anything then . " She explained , " I had this song called ' Picture to Burn , ' that 's talking about how ' I hate your truck , ' and ' I hate that you ignored me , ' ' I hate you . ' Now , the way that I would say that and the way that I would feel that kind of pain is a lot different . " Despite her evolving on a personal level and as a songwriter , she claimed not to be regretful of " Picture to Burn " , rather happy she was able to demonstrate " those emotions that when you 're so angry , you hate everything . It 's like recording your diary over the years , and that 's a gift " , she said .

== Composition ==

" Picture to Burn " is a country song with a length of two minutes and 55 seconds . It draws influences from traditional elements of country music , resulting in an uptempo country rock number . Written in the key of G major , the song is set in common time and has a tempo of 106 beats per minute with a strong beat . Swift 's boasts with " big vocals " that span two octaves , from the note of G3 to C5 . It follows the chord progression G ? Am7 ? C ? D. The verses are driven by banjos and drums , meanwhile the refrains ' instrumentation is marked by distorted guitars .

Lyrically , " Picture to Burn " is an evisceration of a no @-@ good adolescent male , and is directed towards an ex @-@ boyfriend . About the song 's theme , Sean Dooley of About.com commented , " Swift takes no prisoners in her quest to make a former flame feel her wrath for doing her wrong . " In the first verse , Swift introduces relationship by stating she acknowledged the fact that her former boyfriend was more in love with himself than with her . The second verse has Swift plotting retaliation : " There 's no time for tears / I 'm just sitting here planning my revenge / There 's nothing stopping me / From goin ' out with all of your best friends . " For the refrains , she speaks of igniting fire on photographs of her ex @-@ boyfriend , concluding them with a musical punch line , " As far as I 'm concerned / You 're just another picture to burn " . Critics have found the song to a symbol of feminism .

== Critical reception ==

" Picture to Burn " received critical acclaim . Chris Neal of Country Weekly believed " Picture to Burn " , along with " Should 've Said No " , were the most immediately striking songs on Taylor Swift . Jack Lowe of About.com said the song was fun , and that females would specially enjoy it . Kate Kiefer of Paste magazine selected the track as one of Swift 's six best singles , and stated , " She really shows her age in this one " . Roger Holland of PopMatters commented that the song was the epitome of how , according to him , Swift was more given in uptempo tempos , and that it served as indication to the nature of Swift 's debut album . Holland added , " ' Picture to Burn ' is two parts Ashlee Simpson to one part Amy Dalley , with an overly familiar guitar melody that could have been lifted directly from the latter . " Top music critic Robert Christgau selected " Picture to Burn " as a highlight on Taylor Swift . Josh Love of The Village Voice attributed the song to be one of the reasons how the singer rose to stardom . He called it a " bluntly relatable composition [...] that connected [Swift] with teens from across the spectrum . " Patrick McDonald of The Seattle Times called it a " clever , sassy , upbeat song " Alison Bonaguro of the Chicago Tribune said the song was a " clean @-@ but @-@ still @-@ rowdy " number for Swift . Kevin Courtney of The Irish Times mentioned " Picture to Burn " among powerful revenge songs and noted the lyric " Go and tell your friends that I 'm obsessive and crazy / That 's fine / I 'll tell mine you 're gay . " He supported the sentiment behind the song and wrote , " You go girl " .

== Chart performance ==

On the week ending March 1 , 2008 , " Picture to Burn " debuted at number ninety @-@ one on the Billboard Hot 100 . The following week it ascended to number eighty @-@ three , and ten weeks later , on the week ending May 17 , 2008 , it reached its peak at number twenty @-@ eight . The song 's final appearance on the chart was on the week ending July 12 , 2008 at number eighty @-@ nine , after spending a total twenty weeks on the Billboard Hot 100 . The single has been certified double platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America . As of November 2014 , " Picture to Burn " has sold 1 @.@ 6 million copies in the United States .

On the week ending January 26 , 2008 , the single debuted at number fifty @-@ two on the Billboard Hot Country Songs . On its eleventh week , it entered the top ten at number nine , thus giving Swift her fourth consecutive top ten hit from her debut album . Six weeks later , on the week ending May 17 , 2008 , it reach its peak at number three on the chart . It spent a total of twenty

weeks on Hot Country Songs .

On the week ending March 15 , 2008 , " Picture to Burn " debuted at number eighty @-@ five in Canada . It reached its peak at number forty @-@ eight on the chart on the week ending May 3 , 2008 . " Picture to Burn " spent a total of sixteen weeks in Canada . The single was certified gold by Music Canada for sales of 40 @,@ 000 digital downloads .

= = Music video = =

The accompanying music video for " Picture to Burn " was directed by Trey Fanjoy , who directed all three of Swift 's prior music videos . Swift decided to collaborate with Fanjoy once again because she felt that since Fanjoy directed her prior videos , she knew how to deviate from it and what new grounds to cover . As opposed to their previous collaborations , the video was conceptualized to be edgy and comical . Swift herself was styled edgier than usual , sporting clothing , hair , and jewelry she was not accustomed to . She was intended to wear thigh @-@ length boots , but was not able to find a pair to correspond with her height . Instead , her stylist sewed black fabric to strap onto black high heels to give the illusion of thigh @-@ length boots . The video 's plot was conjectured to involve rampaging and seeking revenge on her ex @-@ boyfriend . Swift chose football player Justin Sandy to portray her ex @-@ boyfriend in the video , believing he had a classic and suspiciously perfect demeanor ; she described him as " real like Ken " . Swift desired to portray her backup band 's sense of humor , and thus enlisted them for the video . Swift 's real @-@ life best friend Abigail Anderson also made a cameo appearance in the video .

The video was filmed over the course of two days in Nashville , Tennessee . On the first day , performance scenes were filmed inside the Sommet Center (now named the Bridgestone Arena) , and involved pyrotechnics . Swift was at first nervous about the shoot , as it was her first experience with pyrotechnics . " There are some things I 'm nervous about . My hair could very well catch on fire " , she said . She was later assured of its safety and explained to about the discrepancy in the distance of the fire in reality than on camera : on camera , it appears to be quite close to her , whereas , in actuality , it was placed far behind her . On the second day , the remaining scenes were filmed at a suburban house in Nashville . Props were provided by the video personnel . On the set , Fanjoy suggested using a binoculars for the primary scenes , but Swift disagreed , believing it could come across as cheesy depending on how it was filmed . She ultimately succumbed to the idea due to Fanjoy explaining how it would translate on camera .

The video premiered on March 14 , 2008 on AOL 's The Boot . It commences with Swift and her best friend in a grey 2009 Ford Mustang GT 45th Anniversary Edition , parked behind a tree . Swift reminisces , looking at a photograph of her and her ex @-@ boyfriend together , and states , " Would you look at how happy we were back then ? I can 't believe he turned out to be such a jerk . " Anderson is then seen ogling outside the window with binoculars , and spots Swift 's ex @-@ boyfriend and another woman arriving in a black late 90s ford f150 pick @-@ up truck . She notes the other woman in driving the truck , and Swift states angrily he never allowed her to drive it . As Swift 's ex @-@ boyfriend and the woman start frolicking inside the truck , and the music begins and the music video transcends to a concrete room where the singer (clothed by a grey , one @-@ shoulder mini @-@ dress and black leather , thigh @-@ length boots) is playing an electric guitar , alongside her backup band . During " Picture to Burn " ' s chorus , fire ignites behind them . Afterwards , the band is depicted entering a house furtively , using flashlights . Swift is sitting on a brown couch , sporting a black tank top , black leather pants , and beehive hair , as the band ransacks the house . They throw darts at photographs of him , envelop all of his furniture with toilet paper , mess his mirror with the word " loser " , lick his utensils and spit into his mouthwash . Suddenly , the ex @-@ boyfriend and the woman are shown approaching the house , and , seeing this , Anderson informs them of it via handheld transceiver . He enters the house and discovers it was ransacked , and repeats the word " Taylor " . The video then transitions to Anderson and Swift inside the Ford Mustang , with Anderson also repeating " Taylor " . She then suggests leaving , and Swift says , " You know what ? I 'm over it . " The video concludes with the photograph of Swift and her ex @-@ boyfriend in flames , thrown in the sidewalk . Cut @-@ scenes feature Swift and her

band performing in the concrete room , Swift singing on the couch , or Swift dancing affront a shower of sparks . To date , the video has 76 million views on YouTube .

= = Live performances = =

Swift first performed the track at Billboard headquarters in 2006 . She then performed " Picture to Burn " as she opened for Rascal Flatts on several dates , from October 19 to November 3 , 2006 , included on the Me and My Gang Tour (2006 ? 07) . Swift performed the song dressed in a black , knee @-@ length dress and red cowboy boots with a design of a skull and crossbones across it , as she roamed around the stage . She also performed the song when she served as opening act on twenty dates for George Strait 's 2007 United States tour , and selected dates for Brad Paisley 's Bonfires & Amplifiers Tour in 2007 . During mid @-@ 2007 , Swift embarked as the opening act on several dates for Tim McGraw 's and Faith Hill 's joint tour , Soul2Soul II Tour (2006 ? 07) , where she again performed the song . Swift performed " Picture to Burn " to close while she was again opening for Rascal Flatts for their Still Feels Good Tour in 2008 . While promoting another single from Taylor Swift , Swift executed her first televised performance of " Picture to Burn " was on October 10 , 2007 on Regis & Kelly . She then performed the song at a concert at the Apple Store in SoHo , New York , which was recorded and released as a live extended play (EP) , iTunes Live from SoHo , exclusively sold through the iTunes Store . Commencing promotion for it in early and mid @-@ 2008 , Swift performed " Picture to Burn " on Studio 330 Sessions , Good Morning America , the 2008 CMT Music Awards , and Nashville Star . Since completing promotion for Taylor Swift and its corresponding singles , the singer has performed the song on Clear Channel Communications 's Stripped , at the 2009 CMA Music Festival , at the 2009 V Festival , and at the Australian charity concert Sydney Sound Relief .

Swift performed " Picture to Burn " to close the main set , before commencing the encore on all venues of her first headlining concert tour , the Fearless Tour (2009 ? 10) . During 2009 performances , Swift donned a black cocktail dress with sparkly ornaments along the stomach , as she roamed throughout the stage , which was projected with images of searing flames , singing the song . In the 2010 extension , Swift bared a spangly , violet mini @-@ dress . Jim Harrington of the San Jose Mercury News believed " Picture to Burn " 's performance on April 11 , 2010 at the HP Pavilion in San Jose , California demonstrated how versatile Swift was as a performer , feeling equally at gusto with tender ballads and uptempo rockers . Of the performance at the tour 's final concert on June 5 , 2010 at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough , Massachusetts , Jay N. Miller of The Patriot Ledger said , " She strutted down the catwalk chastising another hapless ex @-@ boyfriend " . Attending the same concert , Molly Trust of Billboard deemed the performance one of the most energized moments of the night , while Susan McDonald of The Sun Chronicle deemed it simple , yet the most powerful .

= = Track listings = =

Rhapsody Digital Download

" Picture to Burn " (Alternate Version) ? 3 : 00

CD Single

" Picture to Burn " (Radio Edit) ? 2 : 54

" Picture to Burn " (Video) - 3 : 05

= = Official versions = =

Album Version - 2 : 55

Radio Edit - 2 : 55 (New Album Version / Beautiful Eyes Version)

Rock Version - 2 : 55

Alternate Version - 3 : 00

Karaoke Version - 2 : 56

= = Charts and certifications = =

= = = Year @-@ end charts = = =