

= Unfaithful ( song ) =

" Unfaithful " is a song by Barbadian singer Rihanna from her second studio album A Girl like Me ( 2006 ) . It was written by Shaffer " Ne @-@ Yo " Smith with the song 's producers StarGate . The song was released by Def Jam Recordings on May 2 , 2006 , as the second single from the album . " Unfaithful " is a pop and R & B ballad and was inspired by the works of American rock band Evanescence . Originally titled " Murderer " , the single speaks about a woman who regrets cheating on her partner .

" Unfaithful " received mixed to positive reviews from critics ; many praised its powerful balladry , but some criticized the lyrics . The song reached the top ten on the singles charts in 19 countries , including the UK Singles Chart , on which it became Rihanna 's third top @-@ ten single . " Unfaithful " peaked at number six on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart . It was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) , denoting shipments of over one million copies .

The song 's accompanying music video was directed by Anthony Mandler , and premiered in May 2006 . It features Rihanna in a love triangle in which she struggles to choose between her romantic interest and her lover , and regrets having cheated on the former . Since its release , " Unfaithful " has become a staple of Rihanna 's live performances . In 2006 , she performed it on award ceremonies such as the MOBO Awards and the World Music Awards . The song was on the set list of three of her major tours , Good Girl Gone Bad ( 2007 ? 09 ) , the Last Girl on Earth Tour ( 2010 ? 11 ) and the Loud Tour ( 2011 ) .

= = Development and release = =

After moving to the US , Rihanna signed a contract with Def Jam Recordings , and released her debut album Music of the Sun ( 2005 ) . The album was inspired by caribbean music , including soca , dancehall , and reggae , and incorporates dance @-@ pop and R & B. In an interview for MTV , Rihanna said that when she had arrived in the US , she had been exposed to different types of music that she had never heard before , including rock music , which she incorporated into her second studio album , A Girl like Me ( 2006 ) .

While recording her debut studio album in 2005 , Rihanna met Ne @-@ Yo for the first time , but they could not collaborate on the album . She wanted to work with him since she heard " Let Me Love You " ( 2004 ) by Mario , which Ne @-@ Yo wrote . When the production for A Girl like Me started , she considered working with him . She said , " So for the second album , I was like , ' You know what ? I have to work with that guy Ne @-@ Yo . ' So we went into the studio and we started working on this song . " Ne @-@ Yo and Norwegian production duo Mikkel S. Eriksen and Tor Erik Hermansen collectively known as StarGate wrote " Unfaithful " , which Rihanna said was " new ground for [ her ] " because it was a ballad . It was produced by StarGate while Debbie Mounsey served as a production assistant . " Unfaithful " was recorded by Eriksen , Al Hemberger , Malcolm Pollack and Tiger Stylz at Battery and Avatar Studios in New York City , Loft Recording Studios in Bronxville and Digital Insight Recording Studios in Las Vegas . It was mixed by Phil Tan and Makeba Riddick provided the vocal production .

" Unfaithful " was released as the second single from A Girl like Me , after the number @-@ one single " SOS " . The song was released to digital outlets in Canada on June 20 , 2006 . A radio edit of the song was release . It is under the same time length of the album and instrumental versions . For the plays on radio stations , the radio edit has the word " gun " omitted . It was also sent to urban contemporary radio stations in the United States on June 29 , 2006 . Seven digital remixes of " Unfaithful " were released on July 17 , 2006 , via iTunes in several countries including France , Germany , Italy , Spain and the US . A CD single of the song , comprising its album and instrumental version , a Tony Moran 's radio mix , and its music video , was released in the United Kingdom on July 25 , 2006 and in August of that year in Germany and France .

= = Composition = =

" Unfaithful " is a pop and R & B ballad that runs for three minutes and forty @-@ six seconds . Originally , it was a dark and moody track inspired by the work of the American rock band Evanescence , with the initial title of " Murderer " . Hermansen and Eriksen collaborated on the melody of " Unfaithful " . In the beginning , the song 's structure was built around piano as the only instrument ; the percussion and strings was added later . The strings on the track were arranged by Robert Mouncey .

Elaborating about the song 's development in an interview for Sound on Sound Eriksen said , " I find that how natural it sounds is not so much about how realistic the string sound is , but more about your choice of notes and how you play and program the strings . " According to the sheet music published by Universal Music Publishing Group at Musicnotes.com , it was composed in the key of C minor using in common time and a slow feeling groove of 72 beats per minute . Rihanna 's vocal range spans from the low note of F # 3 to the high note of C # 5 .

According to Brandee J. Tecson of MTV News , " Unfaithful " is a " bittersweet ballad " that shows a new side to Rihanna . In an interview for the same publication Rihanna said about the lyrics , " I 'm referred to as a murderer in that song . Meaning , I 'm taking this guy 's life by hurting him , cheating on him . He knows , and it makes him feel so bad . " She continued , " We always put it out there that guys cheat , and finally someone put it in perspective : girls cheat too . " In another interview for Newsday , she said that " Unfaithful " was " birthed out of a relationship she outgrew when she was fourteen " . She added that the nature of the relationship was not physical .

= = Reception and accolades = =

" Unfaithful " received mixed to positive reviews from most music critics . Kelefa Sanneh from The New York Times described " Unfaithful " as " a profoundly ludicrous ? but not disagreeable ? pop lament " . Quentin B. Huff from PopMatters commented that , " ' Unfaithful ' is a well @-@ intentioned ballad informed by dramatic piano and strings " . Slant Magazine 's Sal Cinquemani stated , " The melodramatic , string @-@ laden ballad ' Unfaithful ' is , if nothing else , an ambitious second single for an artist like Rihanna , and with lyrics like ' I don 't want to be a murderer / Our love , his trust / I might as well take a gun and put it to his head , ' it earns bonus points just for being so fucking weird " .

Steve Jones of USA Today wrote that while the other ballads on the album were not as strong , " ' Unfaithful ' , in which [ Rihanna ] deals with the consequences of her own cheating heart , shows depth " . Celia San Miguel from Vibe magazine praised " Unfaithful " , stating that it gives Rihanna a " new found charisma , solid vocal range and her ability to channel deep @-@ rooted emotions with ease " . Dan Charnas from The Washington Post described the single as " an honest account of dishonesty " . A reviewer from Billboard magazine likened " Unfaithful " to Beyoncé 's work and concluded that the song reveals Rihanna as a " young vocalist growing into her own " . In an interview about Ne @-@ Yo 's work , Idolator 's Maura called both " Unfaithful " and Knowles ' " Irreplaceable " " ear @-@ candy triumphs " . Quentin B. Huff of PopMatters criticized the song 's lyrics and described them as well @-@ intentioned but " overboard with melodrama " and " devoid of remorse " .

" Unfaithful " was listed at number eight on Billboard magazine 's list of Songs of the Summer of 2006 . In 2011 , the same publication also ranked the song at number 15 on its list of Rihanna 's 20 Biggest Billboard Hits . American magazine Rap @-@ Up listed " Unfaithful " at number nine on its list of the Top 10 Singles of 2006 . " Unfaithful " won the awards for Song of the Year and Best Soul / R & B Single at the 2007 Barbados Music Awards . It also won the accolade for Best International Song at the 2007 NRJ Music Awards .

= = Chart performance = =

" Unfaithful " debuted at number 51 on the US Billboard Hot 100 chart on May 13 , 2006 . The same week , Rihanna 's previous single " SOS " reached number one . " Unfaithful " peaked at number 6

on July 22 , 2006 , after 10 weeks on the chart , and became Rihanna 's third top ten single in the US . On July 29 , 2006 , " Unfaithful " also topped the US Hot Dance Club Songs chart , becoming her third number one there . The song was certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America ( RIAA ) on July 27 , 2006 , after more than one million downloads were shipped . " Unfaithful " was more successful in Canada where it reached number one on the Canadian Singles Chart . In Australia , the song entered the chart at number two , where it peaked , on July 30 , 2006 . It was later certified gold by the Australian Recording Industry Association ( ARIA ) , denoting shipments of 35 @,@ 000 copies . The same week , " Unfaithful " entered the New Zealand singles chart at number five . The next week , it peaked at number four where it stayed for three consecutive weeks .

In Europe , " Unfaithful " reached the top ten in 14 countries . The song was most successful in Hungary and Switzerland where it reached number one on both nation 's singles charts , and became Rihanna 's first single to reach number one on both charts . " Unfaithful " was certified gold by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry ( IFPI ) ? Switzerland for shipping over 15 @,@ 000 paid downloads in the country . In Norway , the song entered the national singles chart at number 18 and after six weeks it peaked at number two , where it stayed for two weeks . " Unfaithful " entered the Austrian singles chart at number eight on August 18 , 2006 , peaked at number two and stayed on the chart for 27 weeks . The single reached number two in Germany and the Republic of Ireland , number three in Denmark , Belgium ( Flanders ) and the Czech Republic , number five in Slovakia , number six in Sweden , number seven in France and number nine in Netherlands . On the UK Singles Chart , the song debuted at number 16 on July 22 , 2006 , and the next week , it peaked at number two . " Unfaithful " re @-@ entered the chart in both 2010 and 2011 , when it reached numbers 31 and 50 respectively . More than 315 @,@ 000 copies of the song have been sold in the UK .

= = Music video = =

The accompanying music video for " Unfaithful " was directed by Anthony Mandler . After their work on " Unfaithful " , Mandler became Rihanna 's regular collaborator , and worked on most of Rihanna 's videos , including " Disturbia " ( 2008 ) and " Russian Roulette " ( 2009 ) . The video premiered May 1 , 2006 on MTV , and was later released on iTunes for digital download .

As the video begins , Rihanna is walking towards a dressing room mirror while preparing for a show . This is intercut with scenes of Rihanna with her boyfriend in a restaurant . While they talk to each other , Rihanna 's boyfriend leaves the table and is absent for some time , during which Rihanna watches the other tables . One diner writes a note and gives it to a waiter , who passes it to Rihanna , who reads and quickly hides the note as her boyfriend returns to the table . Rihanna starts to sing the song 's lyrics while she leaves the dressing room and approaches the stage , where she continues singing while a man plays a piano on the stage . The arena is empty and it appears as though Rihanna is rehearsing .

Other scenes show Rihanna dancing around the piano while the pianist is still playing . While her boyfriend is sleeping , Rihanna sends a text message to her lover , " B down in 5 " . She walks down the street and gets into a car with her lover , who is the note @-@ writing diner from the restaurant and the man who plays the piano at the rehearsal . As the song continues , Rihanna is shown regretfully embracing her lover near the piano . When the rehearsal finishes , she leaves the arena , where her boyfriend is waiting for her with his car . Rihanna hugs him and tears fall from her eyes . A reviewer from MTV Australia wrote about the video 's theme and appearance , " Cheaters always get busted . And this time around , Rihanna sings about being the one doing the two @-@ timing . Secret notes , sneaking around , hearts broken ... Oh , the drama . And she looks goooooood . "

= = Live performances = =

Since its release , " Unfaithful " has been a staple of Rihanna 's performances . On July 27 , 2006 , she performed the song on the former MTV series , Total Request Live . Rihanna opened the 2006

MOBO Awards on September 20 , 2006 at the Royal Albert Hall in London with a performance of " Unfaithful " . On November 15 , 2006 , Rihanna performed the song at the 2006 World Music Awards , which also took place in London .

" Unfaithful " was the twelfth song on the set list of Rihanna 's Good Girl Gone Bad Tour ( 2007 ? 09 ) , her first major world tour . Her performance in Manchester was released in the UK through iTunes and is featured on the Good Girl Gone Bad Live DVD . Rihanna was opening act on some dates on Kanye West 's Glow in the Dark Tour ( 2008 ? 09 ) . Her set list featured " Unfaithful " and other songs from her 2007 release Good Girl Gone Bad including " Don 't Stop the Music " , " Shut Up and Drive " and " Umbrella " . Following the release of her fourth studio album , Rated R ( 2009 ) , in the UK , Rihanna performed a Nokia promotional concert at the Brixton Academy in London . She performed songs from the new release including " Russian Roulette " , " Wait Your Turn " and " Hard " , the latter of which Rihanna performed with Young Jeezy . Rihanna performed " Unfaithful " , and songs from her older releases , including " Disturbia " , " Don 't Stop the Music " and " Take a Bow " , during this set .

In 2010 , to further promote Rated R , Rihanna embarked upon her second worldwide tour , Last Girl on Earth Tour ( 2010 ? 11 ) . " Unfaithful " , which she performed while standing on a stage set with red baroque style curtains in the background , was the thirteenth song on the set list . On December 11 , 2010 , Rihanna was invited to appear on series seven of the UK version of The X Factor to perform her new single " What 's My Name ? " . She also performed " Unfaithful " with finalist Matt Cardle , who later won the series . In June 2011 , Rihanna embarked upon the Loud Tour , her third major worldwide tour . " Unfaithful " was the fourteenth song on the tour 's set list . Rihanna performed the song on a levitating stage while wearing a long yellow dress and with a fan blowing her skirt up , which Jon Bream of Minneapolis ' Star Tribune said looked " like Celine Dion delivering ' My Heart Will Go On ' on the deck of the Titanic " . The Daily Record 's Jules Boyle concluded that " tracks like ' Unfaithful ' and ' Hate That I Love You ' were suitably epic and backed with a full rock band . "

= = Cover versions = =

Indian music director Vijay Antony composed a Tamil language cover of " Unfaithful " , titled " Unakkena Naan " for the film Kadhalil Vizhunthen ( 2008 ) .

= = Track listings = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

#### Recording

Recorded at Battery Studios , New York City ; Loft Recording Studios , Bronxville , New York ; Avatar Studios , New York ; Digital Insight Recording Studios , Las Vegas , Nevada .

#### Personnel

Credits adapted from the liner notes of A Girl Like Me , Def Jam Recordings , SRP Records .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =

= = Radio and release history = =