

= I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) =

" I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " is a song written by composer Alan Menken and lyricist David Zippel for Walt Disney Pictures ' 35th animated feature film Hercules (1997) . Included on the film 's soundtrack , the song is performed by American actress and singer Susan Egan in her role as the film 's heroine Meg , while singers Cheryl Freeman , Lillias White , Vaneese Y. Thomas , LaChanze and Roz Ryan provide girl group @-@ style backup vocals as the Muses . However , only Egan and Freeman are credited as vocalists on the track .

" I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " is a mid @-@ tempo R & B and doo @-@ wop ballad reminiscent of the 1950s that incorporates both Motown and teen pop influences . Stylistically similar to the songs of American girl groups The Ronettes and The Supremes , its lyrics are about denying having romantic feelings for someone and parody those of traditional love songs . In the film 's musical sequence , Meg realizes that she has reluctantly begun to fall in love with Hercules but constantly refuses to admit this , while the Muses insist that she stop denying her true feelings for him and embrace them . " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " was written to replace a slower ballad Menken had originally penned for Meg , entitled " I Can 't Believe My Heart " ; the song was abandoned because Meg 's animator Ken Duncan felt that it was not appropriate for her personality . Menken based " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " on songs he had written for his musical Little Shop of Horrors .

" I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " has been positively received by both film and music critics , who enjoyed its girl group @-@ inspired arrangement , as well as Egan 's sultry delivery and the song 's refreshing difference from traditional Disney ballads ; some critics even dubbed it the film 's best song . While not one of Disney 's most popular songs , " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " has since developed a reputation as one of the studio 's most underrated . American singer Belinda Carlisle recorded a pop rock version of " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " for the film 's soundtrack . American girl group The Cheetah Girls eventually covered the song in 2005 .

= = Background and context = =

" I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " was written by composer Alan Menken and lyricist David Zippel . Menken had originally composed a " soaring " ballad entitled " I Can 't Believe My Heart " for Meg to perform , which would have served as a solo for the heroine intended to depict her falling in love with Hercules . However , Meg 's supervising animator Ken Duncan disagreed with Menken 's song because he believed that the character was simply " too tough " and " hardened by life " to perform such a soft ballad . The writers also agreed that Meg " wasn 't a ballad kind of girl . " Therefore , Menken was prompted to write " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " , the style of which he based on girl group songs he had written for his musical Little Shop of Horrors , with which " I Can 't Believe My Heart " was ultimately replaced . Although she had liked the original song , actress and singer Susan Egan , who voices Meg , agreed that the much slower " I Can 't Believe My Heart " was not a suitable number for her character to perform because it was " too straightforward and literal " , whereas " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " expresses a similar meaning , only " the way Meg would ? without admitting any of it . "

Egan joked that although " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " was " fun " to perform , she felt much more " white " than usual recording alongside the five singers cast as the Muses , who provide the song 's back up vocals . Familiar with singers Cheryl Freeman , Lillias White , Vaneese Y. Thomas , LaChanze and Roz Ryan 's Broadway work , Egan felt intimidated by their powerful voices and riffing abilities . Egan recalled , " Alan would say , ' Okay Lillias (White) , just do a riff over there and LaChanze , you do a little something over here and Susan , just at the end , get from this note to this note and just do a riff . ' I raise my hand and I 'm like , ' Umm , can you plunk it out on the piano ? ' He looks at me like , ' Are you kidding ? ' " While it took Egan half an hour to solidify only one of her riffs , the other singers recorded multiple takes of theirs within that same time ; Egan was greatly humbled by the experience . On the film 's soundtrack , only Egan and Freeman are credited as vocalists on the track . Menken also produced the song . While Danny Troob arranged the song , Michael Kosarin conducted the orchestration .

Recognized as Meg 's signature song , " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " has been identified as the character 's " big moment of romantic realization " in Hercules . Prior to " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " , the audience has only been exposed to Meg 's cynicism ; the song finally reveals that Meg 's cynicism is actually a reaction to her romantic side . " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " reveals that the character has fallen in love too fast before , and explains that she is afraid of repeating the same mistake once more with Hercules . Despite her best efforts , the character realizes that she has in fact begun to develop feelings for Hercules much to her chagrin , but at first refuses to admit this ; the song allows Meg to " work through her denial " . " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " resembles an " admonishing " exchange between Meg and the Muses . Finally , the character 's resistance eventually proves futile and she ultimately relents . Tracy Dye of Bustle described the scene : " Joined by The Muses , Meg attempts to vehemently deny her amour for Hercules " . Writing for film critic Eric D. Snider 's website , Kimber Kay joked that Meg " tries her best to give a top 40 rendition of her solo song , but it gets stolen by the magnificent Muses " . Additionally , the musical number predicts that one of Hercules ' most difficult challenges will be trying to change Meg 's opinion of him . Writing for The Daily Dot , Aja Romano cited the song as Meg 's " I Want " song .

= = Music and lyrics = =

At a length of two minutes and twenty seconds , " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " was written in the key of C major at a tempo of 100 beats per minute , and is performed " freely " in the style of a mellow 1950s girl group song . Featuring " sultry " vocals by Egan , the pop song adheres to " the R & B motif " Menken demonstrates throughout the entire film , incorporating doo @-@ wop this time around . Featuring " cooing shooby @-@ doos and sha @-@ la @-@ las " by the Muses , who perform " gospel @-@ tinged " back up vocals and riffs on the track , Jeffrey Gantz of the Boston Phoenix compared Egan 's " soaring " vocals to those of girl group The Ronettes . Describing " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " as " a traditional Disney [heroine 's] lament , " Vulture.com 's Lindsey Weber acknowledged its " unique Motown edge " , comparing the Muses ' vocals to those of girl group The Supremes . Musically , Irving Tan of Sputnikmusic described the teen pop @-@ influenced " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " as " the closest the Herculean villa ever comes to approximating a Broadway show " . Combined , Egan and the Muses ' vocals span two octaves , from the low note of G3 to the high note of C5 . While acknowledging the uniqueness of Egan 's singing voice , one critic also observed that she lacks the vocal range of the actresses who voiced Ariel from The Little Mermaid (1989) and Belle from Beauty and the Beast (1991) . Meanwhile , Chelsea Fagan of Thought Catalog described Egan 's voice as both " sarcastic " and " smoky " .

Lyrically , the love song is about denial , specifically one 's reluctance to fall in love and succumb to romantic clichés ; Meg deciphers how cliché , insufficient and false love can feel . " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " parodies " classic " love songs , and differs in style from love songs usually featured in Disney films by offering " a unique spin " . Rob Burch of The Hollywood News dubbed " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " an " anti @-@ love song " . Described as an " emotional barnstormer " , the song begins with Egan singing the lyrics " If there 's a prize for rotten judgment I guess I 've already won that " , which is followed by " Been there , done that " . Thought Catalog 's Chelsea Fagan believes that this verse " sums up in four lines everything that we ? ve ever tried to convey while on our third drink out at the bar with the girls " , joking , " I believe this song would come shortly after dancing in a circle with all women , but just before the tearful texting of your ex " , while inspiring listeners to exclaim " You go , girl " .

The song expresses " the hesitancy savvy women everywhere feel when trying to stop themselves from falling head over heels " . Gantz described the Muses ' lyrics " Face it like a grown @-@ up / When ya gonna own up / That ya got got got it bad ? " as " admonishing " . Calling the song a " self @-@ aware ballad " , The Oxford Companion to the American Musical : Theatre , Film , and Television author Thomas S. Hischak observed that its lyrics are " filled with sly anachronisms " . Meanwhile , in his book The Disney Song Encyclopedia , Hischak referred to " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " as a " contradictory love song ... in which Meg denies her true feelings yet admits that she is quite taken with the brawny and naive hero Hercules " , additionally observing the Muses ' " oohs "

and " ahs . " According to D23 , " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " is a love song " For those who don ? t want to admit their hearts ? desires , " as the protagonist refuses to admit her true feelings for her love interest until the very last lyric . Despite being a parody of love songs , " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " is nonetheless considered to be a love song itself .

= = Reception = =

" I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " has garnered positive reviews from both film and music critics , some of whom even identified it as the film 's best song . Aja Romano of The Daily Dot hailed the song as Hercules ' highlight that " satisfies us every time " . Writing for Indiewire , Greg Ehbar cited " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " as his favorite , describing the song as one of the film 's " truly great tunes " . Ella Ceron of Thought Catalog called the song " a pop song made on Olympus . " Irving Tan of Sputnikmusic was especially kind towards the song , which he hailed as " the ultimate pantheon of Grecian achievement " . Tan continued , " the five Muses prov [e] that their pillow talk skills are right up there with the best of them " , concluding , " The track also works well as an alternative to modern pop 's teenage heartbreak music ... be sure to ditch Hilary Duff and play this instead " . Tracy Dye of Bustle hailed the song as " one of Disney 's most addictive pieces of ear @-@ candy , " appreciating the fact that " it veers from the typical love @-@ laced ballads we 're used to . " Rob Burch of The Hollywood News called " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " a " refreshing change of pace " .

Beamsy ranked the song fifth on its list of " The Best Ever Disney Songs " , with author Sophie Hall dubbing Meg " The Celine Dion of the cartoon world " . BuzzFeed ranked " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " 14th in its " Definitive Ranking Of The 102 Best Animated Disney Songs " . Meanwhile , BuzzFeed also ranked the song Disney 's ninth greatest love song , while D23 ranked it 10th in a similar article . " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " is also considered to be one of Disney 's most underrated songs , with the New York Post including it on their list . Moviepilot included the song in a similar article , with author Jeremiah Paul describing it as a " hidden gem " which " should have been another classic " , while praising Egan 's performance .

= = Cover versions = =

To promote the film , American singer Belinda Carlisle recorded a pop rock version of " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " in 1997 , which was included on the film 's soundtrack in alongside Egan 's original . Produced by Gary Wallis and Toby Chapman , Carlisle 's rendition was released as a single in both France and Germany . American girl group The Cheetah Girls covered the song in 2005 ; their version was included on the Disney @-@ themed compilation album Disneymania 3 . Their cover was released as a single . An abridged version of " I Won 't Say (I 'm in Love) " appears on stage in the jukebox musical Disney 's on the Record , performed by Andrew Samonsky , with Meredith Inglesby , Andy Karl , Tyler Maynard and Keewa Nurullah providing backup vocals .