

= Comeback ( Glee ) =

" Comeback " is the thirteenth episode of the second season of the American musical television series Glee , and the thirty @-@ fifth overall . It was written by series creator Ryan Murphy , directed by Bradley Buecker , and premiered on Fox on February 15 , 2011 . In the episode , glee club director Will Schuester ( Matthew Morrison ) allows cheerleading coach Sue Sylvester ( Jane Lynch ) to join the McKinley High glee club in an attempt to ease her depression . Club member Sam ( Chord Overstreet ) creates a tribute band to teen singer Justin Bieber in order to win the heart of Quinn ( Dianna Agron ) , and is later joined by the group 's other male members , minus co @-@ captain Finn ( Cory Monteith ) , to recreate Bieber 's " Somebody to Love " and woo their significant others .

Prior to broadcast , Murphy dismissed rumors that " Comeback " would serve as a tribute to Bieber , and stated that such episodes are reserved for artists with extensive musical catalogs . " Comeback " was met with mixed reception from critics , who deemed it neither bad nor a standout . Critics such as Bobby Hankinson of the Houston Chronicle appreciated the episode 's early Glee aesthetic . Amy Reiter of The Los Angeles Times felt that the episode lacked substance . Sue 's storyline , which focuses on her depression and a suicide attempt , was widely criticized for its inappropriateness . The other storylines had mixed to positive reviews , as many critics deemed the Bieber @-@ related subplot the strongest . James Poniewozik of Time compared it favorably to the Madonna tribute episode " The Power of Madonna " .

The episode features six musical performances , five of which were released as singles . Upon its initial airing , " Comeback " was watched by over 10 @.@ 53 million US viewers , and acquired a 4 @.@ 2 / 12 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic . Unlike the story itself , most critics received the musical numbers with acclaim . The Glee take on Bieber 's songs was praised , as were the vocals of cast members Amber Riley and Lea Michele in their duet of " Take Me or Leave Me " from Rent , and the confidence and performance of Ashley Fink in " I Know What Boys Like " .

= = Plot = =

After her cheerleading squad loses a competition for the first time in seven years , coach Sue Sylvester ( Jane Lynch ) becomes depressed , and stages an apparent suicide by " overdosing " on gummy vitamins . Her colleague , school guidance counselor Emma Pillsbury ( Jayma Mays ) , suggests that she temporarily join the school glee club , New Directions , to lift her spirits . Hoping to create discord within the group , Sue pits members Mercedes ( Amber Riley ) and Rachel ( Lea Michele ) against one another . Her plan backfires when a duet between the two results in a deepening of their respect for one another vocally . In an attempt to bring out the good in Sue , club director Will Schuester ( Matthew Morrison ) takes her to a pediatric cancer ward , where they sing " This Little Light of Mine " with the patients .

Club member Sam Evans ( Chord Overstreet ) establishes a one @-@ man tribute band to teen singer Justin Bieber , which he calls " The Justin Bieber Experience " , in the hope of winning over his girlfriend Quinn ( Dianna Agron ) , whom he suspects still has feelings for her ex @-@ boyfriend Finn ( Cory Monteith ) . Sam performs Bieber 's " Baby " for the glee club , and dedicates it to Quinn ; the performance also excites the other girls in the club . Several of the male members ? Puck ( Mark Salling ) , Artie ( Kevin McHale ) and Mike ( Harry Shum , Jr . ) ? are impressed by the effect he has on the girls , and convince him to let them join his tribute band . The foursome then perform " Somebody to Love " , and recreate the music video for the song in the auditorium to the girls ' delight . Quinn chooses Sam over Finn , but when Santana Lopez ( Naya Rivera ) convinces Sam that Quinn cheated on him , he breaks up with her and begins dating Santana .

Meanwhile , Lauren Zizes ( Ashley Fink ) enlists Puck to help her with her first glee club solo . With Puck 's assistance , she performs " I Know What Boys Like " by The Waitresses , and using a trick he taught her , imagines the club members in their underwear for confidence . Later , Sue suggests that the club perform the anthem " Sing " by My Chemical Romance , as they must present an anthem at the forthcoming Regionals competition . They rehearse the song , and it is well received

by most of the members , who disregard Rachel 's suggestion that they should instead compose an original anthem . Her week with New Directions over , Sue reveals that she has become the vocal coach for one of the glee club 's Regionals competitors , Aural Intensity .

= = Production = =

In January 2011 , rumors began to circulate that Glee was planning a Justin Bieber tribute episode , similar to " The Power of Madonna " for Madonna , and " Britney / Brittany " for Britney Spears . Series creator Ryan Murphy refuted the claims , and stated that such episodes are reserved for artists with extensive musical catalogs . He confirmed , however , that Bieber 's music would be used in an episode in season two as a " small plot point " , and Overstreet 's Sam would perform a song by the artist for Quinn 's approval . On the red carpet at the 68th Golden Globe Awards , cast member Riley confirmed to MTV News that Bieber 's songs " Baby " and " Somebody to Love " would be featured in the upcoming episode , and the singer would receive a tribute similar to Lady Gaga in " Theatricality " ? a tribute , but without a full episode devoted to his catalog . Via his official Facebook page , Bieber stated that he was " truly honoured " to have his music covered on Glee . Prior to broadcast , Overstreet and Bieber interacted via the social networking website Twitter , where Bieber told him " we just gotta work on those moves " , and to " kill it ! "

In addition to " Baby " and " Somebody to Love " , the episode featured cover versions of " I Know What Boys Like " by The Waitresses performed by Fink , " Take Me or Leave Me " from Rent performed by Michele and Riley , " Sing " by My Chemical Romance , and an acoustic performance of the gospel children 's song " This Little Light of Mine " . The pediatric oncology scenes were filmed at the Children 's Hospital Los Angeles ' Center for Cancer and Blood Diseases , where eleven real patients performed alongside Morrison and Lynch . Bailey , the pediatric ward nurse , was played by guest @-@ star Charlene Amoia , who had worked for the series ' sound department during the first season . In June 2011 , she deemed her " Comeback " appearance her favorite guest role in any series , due to working alongside the children , whom she was " so touched by " . Amoia expanded : " They were the most vibrant , energetic kids . It was a really awesome storyline to be a part of . I was really moved by everything . " Though she was not initially aware that the role would involve singing , Amoia was part of the " This Little Light of Mine " group number . The episode 's recurring guest cast members were Overstreet as Sam , Iqbal Theba as Principal Figgins , Shum , Jr. as Mike and Fink as Lauren .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" Comeback " was watched by 10 @.@ 53 million US viewers . It attained a 4 @.@ 2 / 12 Nielsen rating / share in the 18 ? 49 demographic , which made it the highest rated show of the night . It was the third most @-@ watched scripted show of the week amongst adults aged 18 ? 49 , and placed 21st amongst all viewers . The episode declined by 9 percent and 1 @.@ 12 million viewers on the previous episode , " Silly Love Songs " .

With its Canadian broadcast , also on February 15 , 2011 , " Comeback " attained 1 @.@ 75 million viewers and placed 18th in the weekly program rankings . It was again down on " Silly Love Songs " , which ranked tenth and was watched by 2 @.@ 08 million viewers . In Australia , where the episode aired on February 28 , 2011 , it was watched by 909 @,@ 000 viewers and was the 11th most @-@ viewed show of the night . Viewership was marginally down on the previous episode , which attracted 921 @,@ 000 viewers and also placed 11th . In the UK , the episode was broadcast on April 4 , 2011 . It attained 2 @.@ 57 million viewers ? 2 @.@ 14 million on E4 , and 427 @,@ 000 on E4 + 1 ? and was the most @-@ watched show on cable for the week . Viewership again declined slightly from the previous episode , which drew 2 @.@ 63 million viewers .

= = = Critical response = = =

The episode received mixed reviews from critics . Bobby Hankinson of the Houston Chronicle and E ! Online 's Jenna Mullins were pleased by how " Comeback " reminded them of early episodes of Glee ? Mullins hailed the return of familiar characterization , and Hankinson commented : " It felt like old times , and it felt good . " Though he observed that the episode was light on plot , Hankinson praised the writing and comedy . CNN 's Lisa Respers France found the episode 's title apt , as Glee was " firing on all cylinders " with little room for improvement . Erica Futterman of Rolling Stone was " pleasantly surprised " , as she had anticipated a decline in quality from the previous episode , and Kevin Fallon of The Atlantic commented that apart from the Bieber jokes , " the rest of the episode was sharply written and loaded with self @-@ referential jokes " . Other critics found " Comeback " mediocre . Entertainment Weekly 's Sandra Gonzalez wrote that it was " a bit off " , The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff felt that " something was missing , making the whole thing stultifying , lifeless , and boring " , and Robert Canning of IGN deemed it " fine and inoffensive " , but ultimately forgettable . Amy Reiter of the Los Angeles Times was " a little disappointed " in the episode for a lack of substance , creativity and emotional maturity . James Poniewozik of Time deemed it amongst his least favorite episodes , for " not even [ being ] bad in a memorable way " . He noted that " Comeback " was " essentially a collection of subplots " , and questioned its purpose .

The Sue storyline garnered many unfavorable reviews . Reiter criticized her inconsistent characterization , which made her actions seem " like fragments pasted together to form a disjointed collage . " While VanDerWerff was more favorable , he wrote that Sue 's jokes about committing " Sue @-@ icide " were " neither dark enough to provoke a startled burst or laughter nor funny enough to overcome their central tastelessness " , and called the scene in the pediatric oncology ward " woefully misjudged and inappropriately hilarious . " The Atlantic 's Meghan Brown found the use of seriously ill children " borderline offensive " , and called Sue 's suicide attempt " in totally bad taste " . Miriam Krule of NPR felt that Glee treated suicide too lightly , and in doing so sent a mixed message to its youth audience . Poniewozik wrote that Sue has become " a burden on the show " , and described her as " a breakout character who 's broken out of the constraints of recognizable character . " He questioned the point of her arc , and suggested that the attempt at humanizing her was redundant , as viewers already know Sue to be capable of compassion .

Other storylines received a more mixed response . Canning disliked the focus placed on Sam and his thin , " loveable dope " characterization . He found that the love @-@ triangle plot made little sense , and as such was hard to invest in . In contrast , Poniewozik called Sam 's Bieber subplot the episode 's strongest element , and deemed it fun if inessential . He praised Glee for capturing the " disposable fun " of Bieber 's music , " without either sneering at it or making it more than it is " , and called it better in this respect than " The Power of Madonna " . Lauren received several positive reviews . While VanDerWerff found her relationship with Puck " a lot less assured " than in " Silly Love Songs " , Mullins and Gonzalez praised their " endearing " dynamic . Reiter felt that in " Comeback " , while new characters like Sam and Lauren " managed to shine " , established favorites fared less well : " Finn continues to be dismayingly drained of all that once made him so adorable , and Rachel , too , has been deprived of the depth and sex appeal she so carefully developed over time . " Several critics raised similar criticism of Rachel ? Gonzalez found her need for Brittany 's help " too much of a regression " , and disliked her return to " old , desperate habits " after several episodes of personal growth . Canning felt that the storyline was forced , and Poniewozik observed that the episode " seemed to be trying less to advance her character [ than ] simply to give her something to do . " VanDerWerff wrote that Rachel appeared to have five different subplots , none of which came together cohesively , and that it reflected the awkward construction of the episode .

= = = Music and performances = = =

The episode 's musical covers and performances were mostly well received by critics . Hankinson wrote that the songs " blended all of the show 's best charms " , which he listed as " kitschy surprise [

sic ] " , " slick production " and " raw vocal ability . " Futterman also praised all of the music .

The Bieber numbers received a mostly positive reception . Mullins complimented them both , particularly Overstreet 's performance of " Baby . " Futterman said this performance was impressive , " a total pop star package that recalled the Biebs ' swag " . She found this element " smooth [ ed ] over " in " Somebody to Love " , but called the recreation admirable nonetheless . Gonzalez highlighted the Bieber songs as the best of the episode ; she gave " Baby " and " Somebody to Love " grades of " A " and " B + " , respectively . On the former song , Gonzalez enjoyed Sam 's performance , particularly his " übercorny dance moves that made [ her ] ache for the boy @-@ band era . " Although she complimented the male vocalists and their " almost perfect re @-@ creation " of the video , Gonzalez was disappointed the show chose to repeat , rather than reinterpret , the choreography . Fallon praised the two songs : he called Sam " quite charming while channeling Bieber " and said " the acoustic opening to ' Baby ' was actually very sweet , just as it was when Biebs stripped down the tune to open his Grammy performance " . He added that the dancing " stood out " in " Somebody to Love " . Raymund Flandez of The Wall Street Journal expressed disappointment in the Bieber performances " displayed so awkwardly and so undynamically " by Sam . On " Baby " , he opined that Overstreet lacked " swagger " , coordination and charm . He was more impressed by the rendition of " Somebody to Love " , but noted that Sam was vocally overshadowed by Artie .

The performance of the duet " Take Me or Leave Me " elicited praise from Brown and Fallon , who both deemed it the highlight of the episode . Brown noted that " it had that addictive Glee quality of actually feeling like high school , and watching Mercedes and Rachel have a blast blasting each other was a treat . " Gonzalez gave the duet a " B " , as , while there was " so much to swoon for " , she is more partial to ballads because they " discourage oversinging throughout the entire song " . Futterman wrote that while Mercedes had more sass than Rachel , " both ladies sang " . VanDerWerff did not see how the song was relevant , and felt that Michele 's voice was ill @-@ suited to it .

Flandez called Lauren 's " I Know What Boys Like " the highlight of the episode , and VanDerWerff praised it as the best musical number . He complimented her confidence , but said the underwear joke was " unnecessary and overstated " . In contrast , Gonzalez cited the underwear shots as a factor in raising her grade to a " C- " for a song without " basic musicality " . Patrick Burns of The Atlantic was also unimpressed , and questioned Lauren 's spot in glee club , as " her brazen character never ceases to please , but it 's just not believable that she would join the glee club if she cannot sing . " In December 2012 , TV Guide named the cover one of Glee 's worst performances .

On the New Directions collaboration with Sue on " Sing " , Futterman wrote , " By turning down the rock and bringing in a choral element , the song actually came off as a great anthem for the bunch of misfits that is the New Directions . We kind of wish they had put on their choir robes instead and fully embraced the arrangement . " Although Gonzalez gave the performance a " B " , she called it " lacking " and not " regionals material " : " We need to be blown away . " TV Guide also listed this rendition as one of Glee 's worst performances .

= = = Chart history = = =

Of the five cover versions released as singles ? the cover of " This Little Light of Mine " was not released ? four debuted on the Billboard Hot 100 , and appeared on other musical charts . These same four songs were also featured on the sixth soundtrack album of the series , Glee : The Music , Volume 5 . On the Hot 100 , the show 's rendition of " Baby " debuted at number forty @-@ seven ; it was at number fifty @-@ two on the Billboard Canadian Hot 100 . The Glee cover version of " Sing " debuted on the Hot 100 at number forty @-@ nine , placing higher than the original by My Chemical Romance , which climbed from number ninety @-@ two to number fifty @-@ eight , its best showing to that point ; in Canada , both versions debuted on the Canadian Hot 100 in the same week , with the Glee version at number thirty @-@ seven , the highest of the four Glee singles there , while the original charted twenty slots below it at number fifty @-@ seven . The other two songs on the Hot 100 were " Take Me or Leave Me " at number fifty @-@ one , which also made number sixty

on the Canadian Hot 100 , and " Somebody to Love " at number sixty @-@ two , which also made number fifty @-@ three on the Canadian Hot 100 . " I Know What Boys Like " did not chart .