

= Ironic (song) =

" Ironic " is a song by Canadian @-@ American singer Alanis Morissette . It was released in February 1996 as the third single from her third studio album , Jagged Little Pill (1995) . It was written by Morissette and Glen Ballard , and was produced by him . " Ironic " is a pop rock song written in the key of B major , and includes a moderate tempo of eighty @-@ two beats per minute . The lyrics present several situations that are described as " ironic " . This has led to debates about whether any of the situations match the accepted meaning of irony .

The track topped the Canadian RPM Top Singles chart for six weeks , and reached the top five in Australia , New Zealand and Norway . In the United States , the song reached number four on April 13 , 1996 , and currently is her highest @-@ charting single on the Billboard Hot 100 . " Ironic " was certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) . The song won the Juno Award for Single of the Year , and received two Grammy Award nominations in 1997 , for Record of the Year and Best Short Form Music Video . French director Stéphane Sednaoui filmed the music video . In it , Morissette drives through a winter landscape , and she plays multiple roles as her passengers . MTV nominated the music video for six MTV Video Music Awards in 1996 , winning three of them . The music video was listed on VH1 's " Greatest Music Videos " list and was parodied by Allison Rheaume and " Weird Al " Yankovic .

In 2004 , Morissette changed the lyrics of " Ironic " to denote her support for same @-@ sex marriage at the fifteenth GLAAD Media Awards . This version was included on her albums iTunes Originals (2004) and Jagged Little Pill Acoustic (2005) , and was performed at the House of Blues in 2005 , along with Canadian singer Avril Lavigne . " Ironic " was included on the set list of her tour Jagged Little Pill World Tour (1995) , and her compilation albums MTV Unplugged (1999) , The Collection (2005) , among others . The song was covered by Mexican duet Jesse & Joy for their album Esta Es Mi Vida Sesiones (2007) , and by American band Four Year Strong for their cover album Explains It All (2009) .

= = Writing and composition = =

" Ironic " was written by Alanis Morissette and Glen Ballard , and produced by the former for her third studio album , Jagged Little Pill (1995) . In an interview with Christopher Walsh of Billboard , Ballard explained how he and Morissette met , and how " Ironic " was written . He commented : " I 'm telling you , within 15 minutes we were at it ? just writing . ' Ironic ' was the third song we wrote . Oh God , we were just having fun . I thought ' I don 't know what this is ? what genre it is ? who knows ? It 's just good ' " . According to the sheet music published at Musicnotes.com , it is a pop rock song , set in the time signature of common time , composed in a moderate tempo of eighty @-@ two beats per minute . It is set in the key of B major with Morissette 's vocal range from the tone of E5 to B ? 5 , and " Ironic " chord progression starts with the sequence of Emaj7 ? F ? 6 ? Emaj7 ? F ? 6 , before changing to F ? ? Badd2 ? F ? ? G ? m7 in the chorus .

= = = Linguistic usage disputes = = =

The song 's usage of the word " ironic " attracted media attention for an improper application of the term , because according to Jon Pareles of The New York Times , the song gives a distinct " unironic " sense in its implications . According to the Oxford English Dictionary " irony " is " a figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used " . Thus , lyrics such as " It 's like rain on your wedding day " and " A traffic jam when you 're already late " are not ironic . Morissette commented about the writing of the song : " For me the great debate on whether what I was saying in ' Ironic ' was ironic wasn 't a traumatic debate . I 'd always embraced the fact that every once in a while I 'd be the malapropism queen . And when Glen and I were writing it , we definitely were not doggedly making sure that everything was technically ironic " .

Comedian Ed Byrne performed a skit in which he jokingly attacked the song for its lack of ironies : "

The only ironic thing about that song is it 's called ' Ironic ' and it 's written by a woman who doesn 't know what irony is . That 's quite ironic . " Also satirists Berger and Wyse parodied the song in one segment of their cartoon strip The Pitchers . In that episode , a superhero named " Irony Man " compared his superpowers to lyrics from Morissette 's song , causing his cohorts to rename him " The Man from Alanis " . In December 2009 , the comedy website CollegeHumor released a spoof video of the song called " Actually Ironic " , featuring actress Sarah Natochenny , in which Patrick Cassels amended the lyrics in a form that would be appropriately ironic . The CollegeHumor spoof was replicated in July 2013 by sisters Rachael and Eliza Hurwitz , from New York City , who published their version on YouTube . The sisters sing the line " We fixed it for you , Alanis . You 're welcome . " throughout their " It 's Finally Ironic " video . In his 2014 song " Word Crimes " , Weird Al references Morissette 's lyrics by singing " Irony is not coincidence " , and the music video for the song shows a fire truck burning (depicted as " Irony ") compared with rain during a wedding (which is described as " Weather ") . Morissette herself poked fun at her grammar mistakes during a 2013 performance of " Semicolon " with The Lonely Island on Jimmy Kimmel Live ! . In it , Morissette cut off their song to explain that their use of hashtag rap to demonstrate the function of a semicolon is incorrect , to which they respond that her critiquing their grammar is " ironic " .

In 2014 , Michael Reid Roberts penned for Salon.com a defense of the song 's use of the term " ironic " , as the song cites situational ironies , which is defined as the " state of affairs or event [s] that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often wryly amusing as a result " , as some of the situations described in the lyrics could in fact be said to be " ironic " .

Also in 2014 , Michael Stevens of the YouTube channel Vsauce devoted time to the discussion of irony in the August 12th episode " Dord . " In this video , Stevens considers the difference between the typically cited " situational " irony , versus " dramatic " irony . According to him , the irony of the song may not necessarily be in the situations themselves , but rather in the dramatic irony ? when someone is unaware of the significance of the event while others are . The situations aren 't ironic themselves , but life itself is ironic . It is a song about " the difference between what life knows we need , and what life thinks we need . What 's ironic is not 10 @,@ 000 spoons when all you need is a knife , it 's the fact that , as Alanis believes , you have all of those spoons because , unbeknownst to you , but known by life , what you really need right now is only spoons ... or the last thing you need right now is a knife . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Jaime Gill from Dot Music commented on the original version of " Ironic " , on his review of Jagged Little Pill Acoustic (2005) , that " [Jagged Little Pill] gave us pop 's greatest parlour game , with spot the genuine irony in ' Ironic ' " and calling the song " pretty " and " catchy " . But he later criticized the lyrics , calling the song " idiotic " , and giving a positive review to the acoustic version saying : " it actually sounds more relaxed and engaging without the hoary loud guitars of the original " . Even though Stephen Thomas Erlewine of Allmusic marked the track as one of the " All Media Guide track pick " of the album , in a separate review , from the same website , the CD single release was rated with two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half out of five stars . Pareles noted that in verses of " Ironic " , and another song from the album (" Mary Jane ") , " it 's easy to envision Morissette on the stage of a club , singing wry couplets backed by acoustic guitar " . He also commented in another article he wrote , that the song was actually " unironic " . Dave Brecheisen of PopMatters felt that the acoustic version of " Ironic " , was much worse than the original version . The single won the Juno Award for Single of the Year at the 1997 ceremony , and in the same year it was nominated for a Grammy Award , in the category of Record of the Year .

= = = Chart performance = = =

" Ironic " debuted on the Canadian RPM Singles Chart at number ninety @-@ five on the issue dated January 8 , 1996 . Twelve weeks later the track topped the chart , on April 1 , 1996 , staying there for six weeks , being replaced by " Closer to Free " by American band BoDeans . Spending twenty @-@ nine weeks within the top 100 , it was last seen on July 22 , 1996 , at number eighty @-@ one . On other RPM charts , the single topped the Alternative 30 Chart and reached number six on the Adult Contemporary Chart . The track debuted at number eleven on the Billboard Hot 100 , becoming the highest debut on the issue ending March 16 , 1996 . The single eventually reached its peak position , at number four , on April 13 , 1996 . " Ironic " is currently Morissette 's highest @-@ charting hit on the Hot 100 chart . In other US charts , the single became her third number @-@ one hit on the Billboard Modern Rock Tracks , where it stayed for three weeks . The song topped the Mainstream Top 40 , reached number five on Adult Top 40 chart and twenty @-@ eight of the Adult Contemporary chart .

In Australia , the song debuted at number forty on their singles chart . In its eighth week , it peaked at number three on May 12 , 1996 , where it stayed for two weeks . It was last appeared on the chart on July 21 , 1996 , at number thirty @-@ seven . To date , " Ironic " is her best charting song on the country . The song was generally well @-@ received throughout Europe . In the United Kingdom " Ironic " debuted and peaked at number eleven , on April 20 , 1996 . It left the chart eight weeks later , at number sixty @-@ seven . In the Norwegian Singles Charts , it debuted at number eighteen , rising to number seventeen the next week . It rose to number five on its third week , and later peaked at number four , staying there for five weeks . It later dropped one place , and remained there for another two weeks . " Ironic " kept within the chart for seventeen weeks . In Belgium , it reached sixth place on the Ultratop 50 (Flanders region) , and ninth place on the Ultratop 50 (Wallonia zone) .

= = Promotion = =

= = = Music video = = =

The music video for " Ironic " was directed by Stéphane Sednaoui . In the beginning of the video , Morissette is at a gas station , walking to her automobile with a cup of coffee in her hand . Then , she drives her car through a winter landscape , and she begins to sing the song 's first verse . When it comes to the chorus , a second Morissette comes in . She is in a green sweater and sits in the backseat on the passenger side . When the first chorus ends , a third Morissette comes in , and she is in a yellow sweater with braided hair , also in the backseat , but on the driver 's side . Along the way , the yellow Morissette is singing and eating at the same time , and when it comes to the second verse , a fourth and last Morissette comes in , she is in a red sweater sitting in the front passenger seat . During the second chorus , she climbs out of the window when they are still driving and almost gets knocked out by a bridge , but still manages a smile after doing so . The camera comes back to the driving Morissette , after the breakdown , and she takes off her hat , tosses it into the back seat , and becomes as loud as the other three while singing the song . When Morissette sings the outro , she is still driving through the winter landscape , and suddenly the car breaks down (possibly having run out of gas , which may be " ironic " in itself since the video started with her at a gas station .) Morissette (as the driver) gets out of the car , and all her " passengers " have disappeared .

Blaine Allan noted in the book *Television : Critical Methods and Applications* (2002) how Morissette interacts with the watcher . He commented that unlike Britney Spears ' " Lucky " music video , where Spears plays dual role of a girl named " Lucky " and her fan , and both appear together in some scenes helped by visual effects , " Ironic " does not utilize them , using solely editing , giving the sense that all the Morissettes interact with each other . Journalist Carol Vernallis also found that Morissette 's " chitchat " way of singing the song creates an intimate connection viewer . She mentioned the video in her book *Experiencing Music Video : Aesthetics and Cultural Context* (2004) , where she studied how the audience may pay attention to the lyrics of the song in

a music video . Vernallis added that " Ironic " music video functions as a limited example of how the meaning of a song 's lyrics become " inaccessible " when they are videotaped and televised .

Charles Aaron from Spin called " Ironic " music video " neat " . The video was nominated for six MTV Video Music Awards in 1996 : " Video of the Year " , " Best Direction in a Video " , " Viewer 's Choice " , " Best Female Video " , " Best New Artist in a Video " and " Best Editing " , winning the last three . It was nominated in 1997 for the Grammy Award for Best Short Form Music Video . Also , it was listed number eighteen at VH1 's 100 Greatest Videos . In late 1996 , a parody version of the video was released featuring a young girl , Alison Rheaume , who mimics Morissette 's actions and wardrobe while lip syncing to the original song . At the end , her father notices her in the car sitting in the driveway and tells her to stop fooling around . This version of the video , directed by David Rheaume , was included on Morissette 's CD / DVD The Collection (2005) . " Weird Al " Yankovic produced a parody version of the video in 2003 for his television comedy series Al TV , in which he takes the place of the fourth version of Morissette in the front passenger seat .

= = = Live performances = = =

The single was added in the set list for Morissette 's concert tour , Jagged Little Pill World Tour (1995) . The song was added to the tour 's video album Jagged Little Pill Live (1997) . Since then , " Ironic " has been included in her albums MTV Unplugged (1999) , Feast on Scraps (2002) , Live in the Navajo Nation (2002) , and The Collection , as well as 1997 Grammys and the MTV Unplugged compilation albums .

With " Ironic " , Morissette denoted her support for same @-@ sex marriage . In March 2004 , Morissette amended a lyric at the fifteenth annual GLAAD Media Awards : " It 's meeting the man of my dreams / And then meeting his beautiful husband " . She commented to USA Today that her support about same @-@ sex unions " goes a step further than clever lyrics . " She remarked that " [her] fantasy would now be to marry some of [her] gay couple friends . " Later in June 2004 , she said to VH1 : " I don 't have any gay @-@ couple friends who are formally engaged , but I would be honored to support the gay community in that way ... I did it as a sort of spontaneous thing at a radio station about a month ago with a couple , and my heart was so with them . " Morissette recorded an acoustic version of the song with the changed lyric for her iTunes Originals release , in 2004 . Another acoustic version was recorded for the album Jagged Little Pill Acoustic , as well for the compilation album Cities 97 Sampler , Volume 16 (2004) . The song was also performed in a duo with Avril Lavigne at the House of Blues in 2005 .

= = Covers and use in media = =

" Ironic " was covered in 2007 by Mexican duet Jesse & Joy for their album Esta Es Mi Vida Sesiones , and the pop punk band Four Year Strong for their 90 's cover album Explains It All (2009) . In the 1996 novel Naïve . Super by Norwegian author Erlend Loe , the protagonist watches the video for the song on television and dreams about " meeting an Alanis @-@ girl and living in a house together with her " . In the Jay and Silent Bob comic Chasing Dogma (1998) , the character Tricia Jones is singing " Ironic " before Jay steps into the shower . In 2003 , Ji @-@ In Cho covered the song for the German version of the Fame Academy talent show , which became a success in the German charts . In September 2001 , " Ironic " was listed as " one of the songs deemed inappropriate due to its lyrics " by American mass media company Clear Channel Communications , after the September 11 attacks occurred . The music of the song was featured in the romantic comedy film I Could Never Be Your Woman (2007) , where Saoirse Ronan , as Izzie Mensforth , sings an altered version of the lyrics in a talent show . It also made a predominant appearance as the opener to 2013 comedy movie The Internship , starring Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn , as they sing along to it . More recently , the song was briefly on an episode of Castle when the titular character laments about the song 's title being subjected to misuse since it was first released . In 2015 , Morissette appeared on The Late Late Show with James Corden and sang a version of the song with new lyrics " updated " for the technology era , and an homage to the linguistics of the

original mentioned above .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Credits adapted from " Ironic " CD single :

= = Charts = =

= = Release history = =