

= By the Grace of God (song) =

" By the Grace of God " is a song by American singer Katy Perry from her fourth studio album , Prism (2013) , included as its closing track . The song was written and produced by Perry and Canadian record producer Greg Wells . It was conceived following Perry 's divorce from English actor and comedian Russell Brand . This initially made Perry consider making a " darker " album , but instead was channeled into the song . Throughout its autobiographical lyrics , Perry is depicted finding her strength and standing up for herself .

The track was first unveiled at Perry 's headlining set at the 2013 iTunes Festival . Upon the release of Prism , " By the Grace of God " received generally favorable reviews from music critics , who appreciated its vulnerability and picked it as one of the musical highlights from the album , but criticized its placement on the record . Following the album 's release , it has entered various musical charts due to strong digital downloads .

= = Background and production = =

After English actor and comedian Russell Brand divorced Perry in late December 2011 , she was so distraught over the event that she considered committing suicide . Greg Wells , who assisted Perry with the composition of " By the Grace of God " , commented on the situation : " I think she felt so kicked in the head and so publicly embarrassed at being divorced by a text message " . After overcoming her suicidal thoughts and initial shock , she felt prompted to create a " darker " project as compared to her previous albums . Instead , she channelled the entire divorce event into " By the Grace of God " , in which its lyrics depict Perry battling against her suicidal thoughts while lying on her bathroom floor . During an interview with Entertainment Weekly , Perry spoke on how she felt during the breakup : " Imagine what you go through . Imagine what happens when you go through a break up . We all go through break ups and we all get very depressed and desperate . "

" By the Grace of God " was unveiled to industry insiders during a listening party for Prism held in Manhattan , while its inclusion on the album track list was confirmed on October 1 , 2013 . Perry confirmed that the song was the only one included in Prism about her divorce from Brand . However , the song " Ghost " , also present on Prism , includes references to the divorce , particularly the lyric " You sent a text , it was like the wind changed your mind " , although Perry stated that the track was not about the split . She further stated : " That 's the funny thing - it 's not about that chapter in my life , people think that certain songs are about certain people and there is only one song about that time in my life and that song is ' By the Grace of God ' " .

Unlike many of the album 's songs which were written by a multitude of collaborators , " By the Grace of God " was composed solely by Perry and Greg Wells . Wells also co -@ wrote " Choose Your Battles " , the third bonus track from the album 's deluxe edition . For this track , he contributed with playing drums , piano , and the synthesizer . The song was engineered by Ian McGregor at Rocket Carousel Studio in Los Angeles , and mixed by Serban Ghenea at MixStar Studios , Virginia Beach .

= = Composition = =

At a length of four minutes and twenty @ -@ seven seconds , " By the Grace of God " is a pop piano @ -@ driven power ballad . With a stripped @ -@ down production , its instrumental is essentially composed of the sounds of various musical instruments , such as drums , piano and synthesizers along with military drums . Throughout the song , drums , piano , and synthesizers are used in its instrumental . According to the sheet music published by Alfred Publishing Co . , Inc. on Musicnotes.com , it is composed in the key of G minor and set in a 4/4 time signature at a tempo of 82 beats per minute . The melody spans the tonal range of B ? 3 to D5 , while the music follows the chord progression of Gm ? E ? sus2 ? B ? ? Gm ? E ? sus2 ? Fsus4 .

Lyrically , Perry is depicted as having suicidal thoughts and lying on the floor of a bathroom . The song opens with only piano and Perry 's vocals , while she sings " Was twenty @ -@ seven ,

surviving my return from Saturn " , and as the song carries on , she finds her strength , singing " By the grace of God / I picked myself back up / I put one foot in front of the other and I / Looked in the mirror and decided to stay / Wasn 't gonna let love take me out that way " . Perry commented on the lyrics : " [They] are very exact and autobiographical . That 's how I write . But the one thing about those lyrics is you can hear me finding my strength throughout the song . It starts off really low and then I kind of stand up for myself and say , ' No ! ' " . The song also sees Perry rejecting the idea that the relationship ended because of her .

Kitty Empire from The Guardian observed that the song served as a " vulnerable yin " to Perry 's hit single " Roar " ' s " righteous yang " . Josh Duboff from Vanity Fair highlighted the titles of " By the Grace of God " and deluxe edition song " Spiritual " , concluding that the religious undertones were " more prominent " in Prism . Helen Brown from The Daily Telegraph deemed the song " tender " , and Jason Lipshutz from Billboard said it " is the most revealing song Perry will likely ever pen " .

= = Critical reception = =

Upon its release , " By the Grace of God " received critical acclaim . Jason Lipshutz from Billboard thought the song was " obviously not the radio fare fans are used to from the pop star (Perry) " , but that it was " crucial for anyone trying to understand Perry 's Prism mind set " . Philip Matusavage from musicOMH considered that " the fact that [" By the Grace of God "] is the album highlight and is the only song written by less than three people " is an indicator of what Perry should do next . Greg Kot from Chicago Tribune appreciated " Ghost " and " By the Grace of God " for allowing Perry 's vulnerability " to seep through " . In his review of Prism , Sam Lansky from Idolator showed himself divided relatively to the song : he classified it as the " most sonically conventional thing [in the album] " although he immediately stated it was " also the most emotionally gripping " in it .

Randall Roberts from Los Angeles Times affirmed that the song was " cosmic " and that it had a " humming , dark tension in which Perry and melody float like red balloons " . Helen Brown from The Daily Telegraph declared that , in the song , Perry " sounds like a woman , and an artist , who 's finally found herself " . Allison Stewart from The Washington Post said that " By the Grace of God " ranked " among Perry 's strongest (tracks) " , and that it was " her most strangely sensible and affecting song ever , one that distances her from her suddenly @-@ more @-@ callow @-@ seeming peers and also from Brand " . John Walker from MTV highlighted the fact that the song is " light on figures of speech and all @-@ too accessible platitudes " , as compared to the metaphors present on the lyrics of " Wide Awake " .

In contrast , Sal Cinquemani from Slant Magazine described it as " a sappy Paula Cole @-@ style statement of self @-@ actualization " . Jon Dolan from Rolling Stone criticized its lyrics and negatively likened them to those of Alanis Morissette . Kitty Empire from The Guardian found the song to be " ridden with cliché " . Mesfin Fekadu from ABC News thought both tracks were " good " , but stated that they " could be great if Perry didn 't hold back and explored more lyrically and sonically " . Chris Bosman from Consequence of Sound criticized its placement on the album track listing and thought that they " would stand out more if they (By The Grace of God , and closing track Double Rainbow) hadn 't been forced to rub elbows , thus stealing momentum and impact from each other " . Carl Willott from Idolator praised the track as a " nice counterpart to Roar " .

= = Commercial performance = =

Following the album 's release , " By the Grace of God " entered the UK Singles Chart at number 179 on the week of November 2 , 2013 , and peaked on the US Billboard Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart at number 10 , which represents the 25 songs which failed to chart on the Billboard Hot 100 . It also appeared on the US Hot Digital Songs chart at number 71 , where it stayed for only one week . It also entered the South Korea Gaon International Chart at number 77 with sales of 2 @, @ 104 .

= = Live performances = =

" By the Grace of God " was debuted during Perry 's headlining set at the Roundhouse in London , England for her iTunes Festival , held on September 30 , 2013 . Once she finished singing , Perry thanked her fans for " letting [her] stay " . On October 22 , 2013 , Perry held a release party for Prism where she performed " By the Grace of God " along with the other songs from Prism . Tiffany Lee from Yahoo ! Music wrote that Perry 's renditions of " Unconditionally " and " By the Grace of God " " shone like lights through a prism in their acoustic setting " . The song was included as part of the setlist on The Prismatic World Tour .

Perry performed the song at the 57th Annual Grammy Awards which were held on February 8 , 2015 . The performance was in support of domestic violence and sexual assault victims . Before she appeared on stage , a prerecorded video message from U.S. President Barack Obama was screened , which featured him encouraging musicians to support the " # ItsOnUs " sexual assault campaign . Then , domestic violence victim Brooke Axtell delivered a brief speech about her story . During the performance , Perry was clothed in a white dress , while shadows danced behind her . MTV 's John Walker labelled it as her most " powerful performance yet " , while Arienne Thompson of USA Today wrote that it was " powerful and subdued " compared to the " flamboyant and playful " set Perry was known for .

= = Credits and personnel = =

Recording

Recorded at Rocket Carousel Studios in Los Angeles , California .

Mixed at MixStar Studios in Virginia Beach , Virginia .

Personnel

Lead vocals - Katy Perry

Songwriting ? Katy Perry , Greg Wells

Production ? Katy Perry , Greg Wells

Vocal production ? Katy Perry

Mixing ? Serban Ghenea

Mixing engineer ? John Hanes

Drums , piano , synths , and programming ? Greg Wells

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Prism , Capitol Records .

= = Charts = =