

= Tragic Kingdom =

Tragic Kingdom is the third studio album by American rock band No Doubt . It was released on October 10 , 1995 by Trauma Records , a division of Interscope Records , less than 7 months after the release of their previous album The Beacon Street Collection . It is the final album to feature original keyboardist Eric Stefani , who left in 1994 . The album was produced by Matthew Wilder and recorded in eleven studios in the Greater Los Angeles Area between March 1993 and October 1995 . Between 1995 and 1998 , seven singles were released from it , including " Just a Girl " , which charted on the Billboard Hot 100 and the UK Singles Chart ; and " Don 't Speak " , which reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 Airplay and peaked in the top five of many international charts .

The album received mostly positive reviews from music critics . At the 39th Annual Grammy Awards , No Doubt earned nominations for Best New Artist and Best Rock Album . It has sold over sixteen million copies worldwide ; and was certified diamond by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) in the United States and Canada , platinum in the United Kingdom , and triple platinum in Australia . Tragic Kingdom helped to initiate the ska revival of the 1990s , persuading record labels to sign more ska bands and helping them to attract more mainstream attention . The album was ranked number 441 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time .

No Doubt embarked on a tour to promote the album . It was designed by Project X and lasted two and a half years . An early 1997 performance at the Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim was filmed and released as Live in the Tragic Kingdom on VHS and later DVD .

= = Background = =

No Doubt released their self @-@ titled debut album in 1992 , a year after being signed to Interscope . The album 's pop @-@ oriented sound sharply contrasted with grunge music , a genre which was very popular at the time in the United States . The album sold 30 @,@ 000 copies ; in the words of the program director of KROQ , a Los Angeles radio station on which it was one of the band 's driving ambitions to be played , " it would take an act of God for this band to get on the radio . " The band began work on their second album in 1993 , but Interscope rejected most of the material , which was written by Gary Angle , and paired the band with producer Matthew Wilder . Keyboardist Eric Stefani did not want to relinquish creative control to someone outside the band and eventually stopped recording and rehearsing . He encouraged other members of the band to write songs , but sometimes felt threatened when they did . Eric became increasingly depressed , and in September 1994 , he stopped attending rehearsals , though they were usually held at his house . He soon left the band to pursue an animation career on the animated sitcom The Simpsons . Bassist Tony Kanal then ended his seven @-@ year relationship with Gwen Stefani .

The band decided to produce their next album independently and recorded their second album , The Beacon Street Collection , in a homemade studio . No Doubt 's first two singles were released for The Beacon Street Collection : " Squeal " and " Doghouse " , under their own record label , Beacon Street Records . Despite limited availability , the album sold 100 @,@ 000 copies in the year of its release . Their independence attracted Interscope 's attention and ensured that the label would fund a third album .

= = Production = =

Tragic Kingdom was recorded in eleven different studios in Los Angeles , starting in March 1993 and finally being released two @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half years later in October 1995 . During one of these recording sessions , the band was introduced to Paul Palmer , who had previously worked with Bush and was interested in working on No Doubt 's new album . After mixing the first single with David J. Holman , " Just a Girl " , Palmer and Holman went on to do the same to the rest of the record . He wanted to release the album on his own label , Trauma Records , which was already

associated with Interscope , and succeeded in getting the contract .

The album is named after the nickname Dumont 's 7th grade teacher had for Disneyland , which is in Anaheim , California , where the band members grew up . It is a pun on the popular nickname for Disneyland ? " The Magic Kingdom " . The album photography and portraits were taken by photographer fine artist Daniel Arsenault . Gwen is featured in the foreground while the rest of the band members are standing in an orange grove in the background . Gwen pushed for Eric to be included on the album cover ? a source of tension for the band ? reasoning that although he had left the band , he had still contributed substantially to the album . Eric is seen near the back of the picture , looking away from the camera . The pictures on the cover and in the liner notes were taken on city streets in their native Orange County (namely Anaheim and City of Orange) and in orange groves . The red dress Gwen wears on the cover was loaned to the Hard Rock Cafe and was later displayed at the Fullerton Museum Center in an exhibit titled " The Orange Groove : Orange County 's Rock n ' Roll History " . The dress , appraised as high as US \$ 5 @, @ 000 , was stolen from the exhibit in January 2005 .

= = Music = =

= = = Musical style = = =

Tragic Kingdom uses elements of a variety of musical genres . Third wave ska and ska punk (a fusion of ska and punk rock) are the genres most prominent on the album . The album also uses elements of new wave , pop , and post @-@ grunge , and dance rhythms influenced by reggae , ska , flamenco , and Tejano , among others . Apart from No Doubt 's instrumentation , the album uses horn sections on several songs .

= = = Lyrical content = = =

Many of the lyrics on Tragic Kingdom were written by lead vocalist Gwen Stefani , and were about her experiences in life . Those from No Doubt and The Beacon Street Collection were written mainly by Eric Stefani , who left the band after Tragic Kingdom was finished . Therefore , the style of music changed from what the band had previously produced . Guitarist Tom Dumont explained the change in sound in an interview for Backstage Online :

= = = Singles = = =

The first single released from Tragic Kingdom was " Just a Girl " , which details Gwen Stefani 's exasperation with female stereotypes and her father 's concerned reaction to her driving home late from her boyfriend 's house . It peaked at number twenty @-@ three on the Billboard Hot 100 chart and number ten on the Modern Rock Tracks chart . The song also charted on the UK Singles Chart , where its original release peaked at number thirty @-@ eight and its re @-@ issue at number three . The second single was " Spiderwebs " , written about an uninterested woman who is trying to avoid the constant phone calls of a persistent man . It peaked at number five on the Billboard Modern Rock Tracks chart , at number eleven on the Billboard Top 40 Mainstream chart , and at number sixteen on the UK Singles Chart .

The third single was " Don 't Speak " , a ballad about the breakup of Stefani and Kanal 's relationship . It peaked at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 Airplay , and maintained that position for sixteen consecutive weeks , a record at the time , although it was broken in 1998 by the Goo Goo Dolls ' " Iris " with eighteen weeks . The song was not eligible to chart on the Billboard Hot 100 because no commercial single was released , which was a requirement at the time . The song also peaked on Modern Rock Tracks at number two , the Adult Contemporary chart , where it peaked at number six , the Adult Top 40 , where it hit number one and the Rhythmic Top 40 , where it hit number nine . The song also appeared on several international charts , reaching number one in

Australia , Belgium , the Netherlands , New Zealand , Norway , Sweden , Switzerland , and the United Kingdom , number two in Austria and Germany , and number four in Finland and France .

" Excuse Me Mr. " and " Happy Now ? " were released as the album 's fourth and fifth singles , respectively . " Excuse Me Mr. " reached number seventeen on the Billboard Modern Rock Tracks chart and number eleven in New Zealand , but " Happy Now ? " failed to chart anywhere . " Sunday Morning " was released as the album 's sixth single . It peaked at number thirty @-@ five on the Billboard Top 40 Mainstream chart , number twenty @-@ one in Australia , number forty @-@ two in New Zealand , and number fifty @-@ five in Sweden . Composing the song began when Kanal was having a fight with Stefani , then his girlfriend , through the bathroom door of his parents ' house in Yorba Linda , California . Stefani later changed the lyrics to discuss dealing with her breakup with Kanal . Finally , " Hey You ! " was released as the seventh and final single from Tragic Kingdom ; it peaked at number fifty @-@ one on the Dutch Single Top 100 . Despite being a Dutch @-@ only single , a music video (directed by Sophie Muller) was made to promote the single .

= = Release and promotion = =

Tragic Kingdom was first released by Trauma / Interscope on October 10 , 1995 . The album did not appear on the Billboard 200 chart until the first week of January 1996 . To promote the album , Trauma launched a street campaign that targeted high school students and the skateboarding community . No Doubt performed on the Warped Tour , which was sponsored by several skateboarding companies , and at several skateboarding festivals . The album remained low on the Billboard 200 and did not enter the top hundred until February 1996 , when it jumped twenty @-@ seven positions to number eighty @-@ nine . Palmer attributed the jump to a Channel One News program that Stefani hosted in January 1996 , which was broadcast in twelve thousand classrooms , and the band 's subsequent performance at a Blockbuster store in Fresno , California .

In May 1996 , the band worked with HMV , MuchMusic , and the Universal Music Group to put on a global in @-@ store promotion . The band performed and answered questions in MuchMusic 's studios in Toronto , Ontario . The session was broadcast live to HMV stores worldwide and on a webcast so that fans could watch and ask the band questions through MuchMusic 's VJs . Sales of Tragic Kingdom doubled the week after the event . The event 's sponsors lobbied Guinness World Records to create a category for the largest virtual in @-@ store promotion to recognize the event .

No Doubt embarked on the Tragic Kingdom Tour after the release of the album . It chose Project X , headed by Luc Lafortune and Michael Keeling , to design the stage . No Doubt suggested decorating the stage as a clearing in a forest . Project X created three anthropomorphic trees with glowing oranges . The show included clear and mylar confetti designed to look like rain . Lighting design was difficult because there were only four rehearsals , so the show was arranged to be flexible to allow for what Lafortune referred to as " a very kinetic performance " . The band expected to tour for two months , but the tour ended up lasting two and a half years .

An early 1997 performance at the Arrowhead Pond of Anaheim was filmed and was released as Live in the Tragic Kingdom on video cassette on November 11 , 1997 . It was re @-@ released on November 25 , 2003 on DVD as part of the box set Boom Box , which also contained The Singles 1992 ? 2003 , Everything in Time , and The Videos 1992 ? 2003 ; and again on June 13 , 2006 as a single DVD , containing bonus material of extra songs , a photo gallery , and an alternate version of " Don 't Speak " .

= = Commercial performance = =

Tragic Kingdom eventually reached the top of the Billboard 200 albums chart in December 1996 , and it remained there for eight weeks . It was listed second on the 1997 year @-@ end Billboard 200 , behind the Spice Girls ' Spice . In February 1999 , the Recording Industry Association of America certified the album diamond for shipping ten million copies . By April 2004 , the album had sold a total of sixteen million copies worldwide . The commercial success of Tragic Kingdom prompted record labels to sign ska bands , and more independent labels released ska records and

compilations . Save Ferris 's guitarist and vocalist Brian Mashburn stated that No Doubt helped allow bands like his receive attention from the mainstream . Tragic Kingdom topped the Canadian Albums Chart in 1996 , and it was certified diamond by the Canadian Recording Industry Association in August 1997 . In Europe , the album topped the albums chart in Belgium , Finland , and Norway ; reached the top five in Austria , Germany , the Netherlands , Sweden , Switzerland , and the United Kingdom ; and placed in the top twenty in France .

= = Critical reception = =

The album received mostly positive reviews from critics . David Fricke of Rolling Stone magazine gave a mostly positive review , describing Tragic Kingdom as " ear candy with good beats , not just bludgeon @-@ by @-@ numbers guitars " and its music as " a spry , white @-@ suburban take on ska and Blondieesque pop " . Fricke however described " Don 't Speak " as " irritating swill " with " high @-@ pitched rippling " from Gwen Stefani . In 2003 , the album was ranked number 441 on Rolling Stone magazine 's list of the 500 greatest albums of all time . Entertainment Weekly magazine gave the album a C + rating . Reviewer David Browne attributed the album 's sales to Gwen Stefani 's " leggy , bleached @-@ blond calling card " and concluded that " sex still sells " . Browne , however , described the music as " a hefty chunk of new @-@ wave party bounce and Chili Peppers @-@ style white @-@ boy funk , with dashes of reggae , squealing hair @-@ metal guitar , disco , ska @-@ band horns " and the band as sounding like " savvy , lounge @-@ bred pros " . Individual songs were singled out and commented on : " Just a Girl " was described as " a chirpy , ska @-@ tinged bopper " , " Don 't Speak " as " an old @-@ fangled power ballad " , " Sixteen " as a " song of solidarity with misunderstood teenage girls " , and " Spiderwebs " and " End It on This " as " [Stefani] acknowledg [ing] obsessions with losers and tr [ying] to break free . "

Calling the album a marked improvement over " the diffuse , rambling songwriting of [No Doubt 's] two previous CDs " , Los Angeles Times critic Mike Boehm felt that on the album , " The band is bright , hard @-@ hitting and kinetic , as sharp production captures the core , four @-@ man instrumental team and adjunct horn section at their best " . In a favourable review for The Village Voice , critic Chuck Eddy felt that although " [the album] turns pretentious ... No Doubt resurrects the exuberance new @-@ wave guys lost when ' 80s indie labels and college radio conned them into settling for slam @-@ pit fits and wallflower wallpaper " . AllMusic called it " pure fun " and described the music as something " between ' 90s punk , third @-@ wave ska , and pop sensibility " and a mix of " new wave melodicism , post @-@ grunge rock , and West Coast sunshine " , indicating the songs " Spiderwebs " , " Just a Girl " , and " Don 't Speak " as " positively [ruling] the airwaves " . Yahoo ! Music reviewer Bill Holdship called the album a " phenomenon " containing " hit after hit " , and describing " Spiderwebs " as " a terrific opener " . Reviewer Robert Christgau gave the album a C + rating , calling Stefani " hebeephrenic " and the album " hyped up " and not " as songful as its fun @-@ besotted partisans [claim] " . At the 1997 Grammy Awards , No Doubt were nominated for Best New Artist and Best Rock Album . In a retrospective review in April 2009 , Adrienne Warrell of 34th Street Magazine called Tragic Kingdom a " perfect mixture of ska and power ballad , horn sections and deep vibrato vocals , an inclusive pop style with a touch of classic punk " , and described its appeal to young teenagers .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Tragic Kingdom .

No Doubt

Gwen Stefani ? vocals

Tom Dumont ? guitar

Tony Kanal ? bass

Adrian Young ? drums , percussion
Eric Stefani ? keyboards , piano
Phil Jordan ? trumpet
Additional personnel

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =