

= Castle Walls =

" Castle Walls " is a song by American singers T.I. and Christina Aguilera , from T.I. ' s seventh studio album No Mercy (2010) . Alex da Kid produced the song and co @-@ wrote it along with Skylar Grey and T.I. The song was initially produced for Diddy 's album Last Train to Paris , but Diddy felt that " Castle Walls " would be better suited to T.I. ; Aguilera was later chosen as the featured artist on the song . A hip hop and electro number , " Castle Walls " received mixed response from music critics , some of whom picked it as a highlight from No Mercy , and some others criticized the song 's lyrics . Despite not being released as a single , the track still managed to appear on record charts of several nations , including on the US Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles , where it peaked at number five .

= = Background = =

Originally , " Castle Walls " belonged to Diddy , who had commissioned the song for his fifth album Last Train to Paris with his group Dirty Money . But Diddy told T.I. , " Yeah , this is my record , but you know what , I think this is a better fit for you . I think you should rock out on this one . I think this speaks volumes to where you are , what you going through , what you living and how you feel . " Consequently , Christina Aguilera was chosen as the featured guest on the song , which appeared on T.I. ' s album No Mercy . Alex da Kid , producer of the song , said about the collaboration , " I love it . I think it 's amazing . It 's my sound , just kind of an evolution of that . I think it 'll cater to a lot of different people . " T.I. told RapFix Live about the track 's inspiration :

I live the life that most would die for , but there 's a lot of things that come with this life . People don 't take that into consideration . There are a lot of things in this life that I would trade in a minute just for a slice of normalcy [...] I just listed a few things that they probably never viewed from that particular perspective . Because I think people need to see things another way ; they need to see it other than just celebrity .

In November 2010 , Alex da Kid announced that " Castle Walls " would be released as a single from No Mercy . However , the song was not released . A 30 @-@ second snippet of the song featuring Aguilera 's part was released onto YouTube later that month .

= = Composition = =

" Castle Walls " lasts for a duration of 5 : 29 (five minutes and twenty nine seconds) and is a hip hop and electro song . The song features a Europop keyboard in its arrangement . Nathan Rabin from The A.V. Club wrote that the lyrics of " Castle Walls " " offer similarly incisive and only occasionally self @-@ pitying commentary on the tragedy and triumph of being young , black , rich , famous , and a repeat felon . " The song begins with the chorus , in which Aguilera sings , " Everyone thinks that I have it all / But it 's so empty living behind these castle walls (These castle walls) / If I should tumble if I should fall / Would anyone hear me screaming behind these castle walls ? / There 's no one here at all , behind these castle walls . " After the chorus , T.I. raps the verse " See with the Phantoms and Ferraris in the driveway / But you see it came in exchange of a sane man 's sanity / Your vision jaded by the Grammys on the mantelpiece / Just switch your camera lenses , you will see the agony " over a " warbling " electronic background and hip hop beats . Towards the song 's conclusion , there is a " sad " string arrangement and an electronica @-@ influenced " triumphantly striding beat . " An editor from HipHopDX compared " Castle Walls " to " Love the Way You Lie " by Eminem featuring Rihanna , which was also produced by da Kid .

= = Reception = =

" Castle Walls " received mixed reviews from music critics . Becky Bain from Idolator called " Castle Walls " a " bright spot " for both T.I. and Aguilera " after the not @-@ so @-@ great years both artists have had . " Steve Jones , an editor from USA Today , praised Aguilera 's appearance on the

track and picked it as one of the highlights on No Mercy . Likewise , Slava Kupersein of HipHopDX and The Boston Globe 's Ken Capobianco labelled " Castle Walls " a standout from No Mercy and applauded Aguilera 's vocals . Chase McMullen from One Thirty BPM thought that the song " epitomizes the album nearly perfectly " , but opined that Justin Timberlake should be the guest vocalist rather than Aguilera . Leah Greenblatt of Entertainment Weekly simply deemed the track " mournful , lonely " and described the chorus on the song as " melancholy " .

David Amidon writing for PopMatters wrote a mixed review , calling " Castle Walls " " heartfelt [...] but it also feels like a hip @-@ hop version of late @-@ period Phil Collins , a sort of end so inoffensive and far removed from the life force of hip @-@ hop as to appear a sick joke . " Critic Jody Rosen from Rolling Stone was displeased with the lyrics of the song , deeming it " an icky bit of self @-@ pity from a rich and famous man . " Sean Fennessey of The Washington Post named it an " unfortunately regal perspective " , while Pitchfork Media 's Tom Breihan called it " downright insulting . " Prefix Magazine 's Dave Park described " Castle Walls " as " cloying " and opined that the track bore an " embarrassing resemblance " to Britney Spears ' song " Lucky " (2001) .

Despite not being released as an official single , " Castle Walls " still managed to enter the record charts of several countries . The track was a success in South Korea , where it debuted at number six on the Gaon International Singles Chart during the week of 5 December 2010 . In the United States , the song reached number five on the Bubbling Under Hot 100 Singles chart and number 84 on the Hot R & B / Hip @-@ Hop Songs . On the Canadian Hot 100 chart , it peaked at number 99 . " Castle Walls " also entered the charts of three European countries : number 27 in Czech Republic , number 31 in Slovakia , and number 51 in Sweden .

= = Weekly charts = =