

= Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary =

" Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " is a song recorded by Barbadian recording artist Rihanna for her seventh studio album Unapologetic ( 2012 ) . It was written by Rihanna with the song 's producers Terius Nash and Carlos " Los " McKinney . An electro @-@ R & B , Electronica and new wave song , the two songs derive its musical structure from the genres of electronica and new wave . Lyrically , " Love Without Tragedy " is love @-@ oriented while in " Mother Mary " the singer makes a confession about a moment in her life which she regrets .

The song received positive reviews from music critics . Many reviewers praised the deep meaning of the song and her vocal performance . Additionally , it received comparison to the works by The Police and their lead singer Sting . Upon the release of Unapologetic , " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " debuted at number 95 on the French Singles Chart , 113 on the UK Singles Chart and 13 on the UK R & B Chart , due to strong digital download sales . " Mother Mary " serves as the introduction to Rihanna 's Diamonds World Tour ( 2013 ) .

= = Writing and production = =

" Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " was written by Rihanna together with Terius Nash and Carlos McKinney , with the latter two producing the song . Kuk Harrell provided the vocal production of the song and also recorded Rihanna 's vocals with Marcos Tovar at R Studios in Los Angeles . All the music was recorded by Bart Schoudel at Sarm Studios in London and Westlake Recording Studios in Los Angeles ; Blake Mares and Robert Cohen served as the song 's assistant engineers . " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " was mixed by Jayson Joshua at Larabee Studios in Burbank , California .

= = Composition and lyrical interpretation = =

" Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " represents two electronica and new wave integrated songs , which last for a duration of 6 : 58 . The experiments with electronica are done by using Moog synths and " vaporous keyboards " as part of the instrumental. i @-@ D 's Nick Levine described the song as a " electro @-@ R & B epic " that was " influenced by Sting 's old band , The Police " Smokey Fontaine for The Huffington Post thought that Rihanna appeared to be channeling synth @-@ laden songs released by Madonna in the 1990s . Lyrically , it progresses from being a love song to a " full @-@ on confessional " , and references famous actress , Marilyn Monroe and actor , James Dean , respectively . Dan Nolan for Rolling Stone considered the song 's lyrics to be a cliché , as they combine " real terror and impossible resolve " .

In the first part , " Love Without Tragedy " , Rihanna as the narrator , sings about a moment in the life which she regrets in the lines " Who knew the course of this one drive / Injured us fatally / You took the best years of my life / I took the best years of your life " . " Love Without Tragedy " , blends 80s pop music and guitar with a " modern and fresh " reggae inspired melody . Rihanna is channeling the emotions caused by her assault from Chris Brown in which can be seen through the lines " Felt love struck me with a knife / I pray that love don 't strike twice " , and " Who knew the course of this one drive injured us fatally ? " .

As " Love Without Tragedy " draws to a close , a " retro " breakdown plays and transitions into the second part of the song , " Mother Mary " . For " Mother Mary " , the heavy synths which are present on " Love Without Tragedy " are removed as she " cries " the line " I 'm prepared to die ... " in an introspective tone . She confesses " Mr. Jesus , I would love to be a Queen ... / but I 'm from the left side of an island " in what Fontaine described as a " perfect raise @-@ your @-@ smartphone @-@ candle moment " . Rihanna displays an " uplifting " vocal on " Mother Mary " as she confesses how Brown 's attack affected her .

= = Critical reception = =

Dan Martin for NME felt that " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " could possibly be the best song on Unapologetic , writing that it moves Rihanna into a " new sonic and emotional space " due to its confessional feel . Billboard named it " a deeply personal song sold by Rihanna 's uplifting vocal . " Chris Youine for 4Music compared the song 's musicality to the work of English rock band The Police and Sting , describing its composition as " instantly likable and clever " . Younie concurred with Martin on the subject of Rihanna 's extreme confessionalism , and wrote that it is very personal . Greg Kot for Chicago Tribune thought that " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " was Unapologetic 's " emotional centerpiece " . Stacy @-@ Ann Ellis of Vibe agreed , calling it " the most autobiographical seven minutes on Unapologetic . It 's almost too raw in its intimacy . " Ellis added : " It 's here we notice Rihanna 's life could be the basis of a Shakespearean play . During its intentionally abrupt tonal transition , the honesty becomes devastating . " Spin 's Caryn Ganz compared " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " to " Message in a Bottle " ( 1979 ) by The Police and wrote that on the song Rihanna sounds as both " a petulant teen and a world @-@ weary woman " . Dan Stern for MTV Buzzworthy felt that Rihanna was channeling Madonna the second part of the song , " Mother Mary " .

Andy Kellman of AllMusic selected the song as one of the album 's highlights , noting that it has " a wide theatrical scope akin to that of The @-@ Dream 's own ' Nikki , Pt . 2 / Abyss . ' " He further analysed : " Over a swelling and receding production with echoes of Kim Carnes ' ' Bette Davis Eyes , ' Rihanna mourns ( " Felt like love struck me in the night / I pray that love don 't strike twice " ) , then confesses ( " Mother Mary , I swear I wanna change " ) , then surrenders ( " I 'm prepared to die in the moment " ) . Perhaps no one should read anything into it . " Christina Lee of Idolator observed that the song " casts out the album 's most heartbreaking line ? ' I 'm prepared to die at the moment ' ? but puts it in a context that doesn 't explain enough . " Esquire 's Miles Raymer thought that Police would have been a better band if they would have had Rihanna as their lead singer instead of Sting ; however , he described " Mother Mary " as something to skip . Alike Raymer , Bernard Perusse for The Montreal Gazette felt that only " Love Without Tragedy " was worth listening to and described it as demonstrating " a tiny bit of hope " on the album . In a review of the album , Jessica Hopper of Pitchfork Media wrote that " Rihanna sings a grim rhetorical : " What 's love without tragedy ? " However , according to her the real question that she and her songwriters is presenting on the record is " Who is Rihanna without Chris Brown ? " " Nathan Slavick for DJ Booth was critical of the tracks theme , writing that " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " , along with " Stay " and " No Love Allowed " , all discuss the topic of Rihanna being a non @-@ controversial person who is struggling to find love in a " mad world " . He further wrote that none of them are impressive . "

= = Credits and personnel = =

#### Recording

Recorded at Sarm Studios , London , UK ; Westlake Recording Studios , Los Angeles , CA .

Mixed at Larrabee Studios , Burbank , CA .

#### Personnel

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Unapologetic , Def Jam Recordings , SRP Records .

= = Charts = =

Upon the release of Unapologetic , " Love Without Tragedy / Mother Mary " charted in France and on two charts in the United Kingdom due to strong digital downloads . It debuted on the French Singles Chart at number 95 for the week dated December 1 , 2012 , and remained on the chart for one week . On December 2 , 2012 , it debuted at number 113 on the UK Singles Chart , and number 19 on the UK R & B Chart .