

= Side Effects (song) =

" Side Effects " is a song by American singer and songwriter Mariah Carey from her eleventh studio album , *E = MC ²* (2008) . It was written by Carey , Scott Storch , Crystal Johnson and the songs featured artist , Young Jeezy . It was inspired by Carey 's marriage to record executive Tommy Mottola and his controlling nature over her and her career . Carey discusses how she still deals with the side effects of the experiences that she encountered during the relationship . Critical response to the song was positive , with many critics highlighting it as an album standout , praising its candid lyrics and honesty . It charted at number 93 on the U.S. Billboard Pop 100 chart upon the release of the album .

= = Background = =

In 1988 , Carey moved to Manhattan , New York to pursue a career in music . After working as a background singer for rising pop singer Brenda K. Starr , Carey was introduced to Tommy Mottola , head of Columbia Records , at a record executives gala . Accompanied by Starr , Carey handed Mottola her demo tape , featuring four of the eleven songs that would eventually comprise her debut studio album . In what has been largely described as a " Cinderella @-@ like story " , Mottola heard the tape in his Limousine ride home , and quickly returned to the event to find the girl with the " elusive voice " . When he arrived , Carey had already left early , disappointed in the events of the evening . In what became a search , Mottola began to track Carey down through Starr 's management and eventually signed her to Columbia 's roster of artists . After the release of her self @-@ titled debut album (1990) , Carey rose to fame , with the album selling over 15 million units globally . During the recording of Carey 's third album , *Music Box* (1993) , the pair became romantically involved , and wed by August 1993 , only one month short of the album 's release . The couple moved into a large 12 @-@ bedroom mansion in upstate New York , a home Carey would later come to be described as a " private prison " and " golden cage " .

Referring to Columbia , Carey said in an interview " That company , made a billion dollars from the raggedy girl he met at that party . " Throughout the marriage , Mottola , both Carey 's husband and boss , carefully manipulated and controlled her career , crafting her into the adult contemporary / pop singer he sought her to be . With each album , Carey 's genre influences and production styles evolved , leading her farther into R & B and hip @-@ hop territory . By 1994 , Carey was already the best @-@ selling artist of the 1990s , and the labels best @-@ selling act . Due to her continued success , Carey was able to take more creative control over subsequent projects . During the recording sessions for her fifth album *Daydream* (1995) , the couple had already begun " fighting at the drop of a feather " , due to his controlling nature over their personal life and her career . They separated in 1997 , and divorced the following year . Carey described her sixth album *Butterfly* (1997) as her magnum opus , and her greatest and most personal work , due to its personal and emotional background . On the album 's title track ? written by Carey for Mottola ? Carey reached out to him , asking to allow her to be free like a ' butterfly ' , and if the two were ' meant to be ' , then the butterfly ' would return ' . In an interview with *Interview* magazine , Carey described the importance the song held for her , as well as its meaning :

It was ' 97 and I was leaving my marriage [to Tommy Mottola] . which encompassed my life . I was writing the song ' *Butterfly* ' wishing that that 's what he would say to me . There 's a part that goes , ' I have learned that beauty / has to flourish in the light / wild horses run unbridled / or their spirit dies / you have given me the courage / to be all that I can / and I truly feel ... [sings] and I truly feel your heart will lead you back to me when you 're ready to land . ' At that point I really believed that I was going to go back to the marriage ? I didn 't think I was going to leave forever . But then the things that happened to me during that time caused me to not go back . Had it been , ' Go be yourself , you 've been with me since you were a kid , let 's separate for a while , ' I probably would 've . "

" *Butterfly* " became what Carey later described as her " favorite and most heartfelt ballad . " Its lyrics were very personal , linking to her personal life and relationship with Mottola . Carey wrote " *Butterfly* " for Mottola , hoping he would say its contents to her , and choose to do what was best for

her . She described it as " the best ballad she had ever written " and credited it as the epitome of Butterfly .

= = Production and composition = =

" Side Effects " was written by Carey , Scott Storch , Crystal Johnson and featured artist Young Jeezy . It was produced by Carey for Maroon Entertainment and by Storch on behalf of Tuff Jew Productions / Hustla Foundation . Copyright is held by Rye Songs which is administered by Songs of Universal (BMI) / Scott Storch Music / TVT Publishing (ASCAP) / C @-@ Style Ink / Slide That Music / EMI @-@ April Songs (ASCAP) / YJ Music (BMI) . The track was recorded by Brian Garten at Honeysouth Studios in Miami , Florida , and mixed by Fabian Marasciullo at The Hit Factory , also in Miami . Carey and Johnson performed the background vocals .

It is an R & B song with elements of electro . Lyrically , Carey is recounting a past relationship which fell into " violent times " , and how she still deals with the effects of what she experienced . Carey begins with the line " I was a girl / You were ? the man ' / I was too young to understand / I was naïve / Believing everything you told me . " Although Carey never mentions Mottola 's name , many critics believed that she was addressing him directly in the lines " Shining like a chandelier / That decorated every room inside / The private hell we built " , " Sleeping with the enemy , aware that he was smothering every last part of me " and " Said you were strong / Protecting me / Then I found out that you were weak / Keepin ' me there , under your thumb / Cause you were scared that I 'd become much / More than you could handle . " After confessing that she would " [wake] up scared some nights , still dreaming about the violent times , " Carey decides to walk away from the relationship , and declares " but I still live with the side effects " . J. Freedom De Luc of The Washington Post likened the " echoing " repetition of " Side effects " to that of Rihanna 's on her 2007 single " Umbrella " . In an interview with Jennifer Vineyard of MTV News , Carey explained why she felt compelled to write the song :

' I wrote it because it was necessary for me to write it , ' Mariah said of her most personal , and angriest , song to date . Fans might be surprised at her references to ' the hell that we built ' and the ' violent times , ' but Mariah thinks this song is for ' anyone who ? s been in an abusive relationship . ' ' You know what ? I ? ve been through too much at this point , ' she said . ' I want happiness and I want pure and real love , but the side effects of what other relationships have put me through cause me to be kind of on the defensive a lot of the time . And if somebody isn ' t mature or caring and loving and open @-@ hearted enough to understand that , then it ? s tough , but this is a song for people who need that . ' Mariah hopes that this song helps people feel ' a little bit stronger.'

= = Reception = =

The Guardian 's Alex Macpherson praised the song , writing " the magnificent Side Effects finds Carey at the height of her powers . Over synths as slow as molasses , she intones some of the darkest lyrics of her career , a meditation on the long @-@ term effects of an abusive relationship . Verbose to the point of opulence , she crams syllables into the verses , races against her own emotions and perfectly conveys the song 's claustrophobic intensity . " Joey Guerra from the Houston Chronicle singled out " Side Effects " as " an an electro @-@ tinged standout " in his review of the album . He praised Storch and Young Jeezy for giving the song a " menacing mood " . Writing for Fox News , Roger Friedman described Carey 's vocals performance as " gorgeous " , Jeezy 's rap verse as " cool " and the hook as having Top 40 appeal . He continued to write that Mottola would most likely do a spit @-@ take upon hearing the lyrics . Describing the song as " a not @-@ so @-@ thinly @-@ veiled swipe " at Mottola , Evan Sawdey of PopMatters thought that the lyrical content would " raise some eyebrows " . The New York Times writer Ben Ratliff labeled the track as a " drama bomb " which recounts how Carey lived under the spell of Mottola during their marriage . The Washington Post 's J. Freedom De Luc thought that " Side Effects " was one of the albums highlights along with " Touch My Body " and " I Wish You Well " , and continued to write that Carey appears to be unloading onto her ex @-@ husband . Nick Levine from Digital Spy described

the song as Carey 's revenge on Mottola , and " her rawest , most personal track in years " . Jayanthi Daniels of The New York Sun was critical of " Side Effects " as well as " I 'm That Chick " , describing them as " throwaway pop tracks " on a hip @-@ hop album .

= = Live performances = =

On July 31 , 2008 , Carey performed a free concert at the Hollywood and Highland Center shopping mall in Los Angeles , California , for 2 @,@ 000 people . Young Jeezy joined Carey on stage to perform " Side Effects " ; Todd Martens of the LA Times said of the performance that his " gruff intonations providing a surprisingly effective counterbalance to Carey 's pleasantly light phrasing " . Carey also performed " We Belong Together " , " Shake It Off " and a medley of " Touch My Body / I 'll Be Lovin ' U Long Time " . The concert was filmed and presented on Jimmy Kimmel Live ! , as part of Samsung AT & T Summer Krush concert series . The production cost of the concert was estimated to be \$ 250 @,@ 000 ; according to Kimmel 's music booker Scott Igoe . He confirmed that the cost was not incurred by Kimmel , and that Samsung made a contribution because " Carey doesn 't come cheap " .

= = Charts = =