

= Back to Tennessee ( song ) =

" Back to Tennessee " is a country rock song by American singer @-@ songwriter and actor Billy Ray Cyrus . It released as the second single from Cyrus ' eleventh studio album of the same name on February 2 , 2009 by Lyric Street Records . Cyrus drafted the song after learning that Hannah Montana : The Movie , a film he would star in , would be set in Tennessee . The song , developed with the aid of co @-@ songwriters Tamara Dunn and Matthew Wilder , includes country rock elements while describing Cyrus ' longing to return to the South , where he grew up , after spending several years in Los Angeles . " Back to Tennessee " was featured in both Hannah Montana : The Movie and its soundtrack .

" Back to Tennessee " was well received by critics , though some felt it took the album 's message too literally . It was a moderate commercial achievement for Cyrus and charted within the top fifty of the Billboard magazine chart Hot Country Songs . The song 's music video was directed by Declan Whitebloom and features scenes of Cyrus at a beach inter cut with clips of Hannah Montana : The Movie . The song was performed in several venues .

= = Development = =

Cyrus moved to Los Angeles to star on the Disney Channel television series Hannah Montana in 2006 . Cyrus 's character , Robby Ray Stewart , is a former country singer and the father of Miley Stewart , a popstar played by Miley Cyrus , Cyrus ' real life daughter . The television series became a worldwide hit and the basis for Hannah Montana : The Movie , a feature film released in 2009 .

Cyrus first read the script for Hannah Montana : The Movie while in Malibu in early 2008 . The film 's plot features the Stewarts leaving Hollywood for a summer and returning to Tennessee , their home state , to reconnect with their southern roots . Having grown up in Kentucky , Cyrus was excited to learn the film would be set in the country and fought for it to be filmed on location . " They were gonna film it in a different state [ but ] I just knew that Tennessee had all the facilities , the man power , and the ability to make this film great , " said Cyrus . In addition , Cyrus believed that " in real life , Miley and [ he ] needed to come back home " , saying , " It was important for us to come back to where we are from and remember who we are . " Once filming in Tennessee was settled , Cyrus was " overcome with a very positive emotion of coming back home " and wrote " Back to Tennessee " with the aid of songwriters Tamara Dunn and Matthew Wilder .

Cyrus recorded " Back to Tennessee " for the film Hannah Montana : The Movie , in which his character performs the song at a fundraiser to save the meadows near his hometown from development . Cyrus says the song is " part of the cornerstone " of the film because it reflects the film 's theme of escaping the fast @-@ paced , glitzy world of Hollywood in search of a simpler country lifestyle . Cyrus commented ,

" It 's about remembering , you know , where you come from . It 's always important to be aware of where you 're at and always be looking to where you wanna go , but most importantly don 't forget where you come from . That 's ' Back to Tennessee ' is all about [ ... ] With me , I always try to keep it real with the music , you know . Line by line you listen to the song and you know that I 'm walking the walk and talking the talk . It 's what this song 's all about . It definitely comes from the heart . "

= = Composition = =

" Back to Tennessee " is one of the more rock music influenced tracks on Back to Tennessee . It is set in common time with a country rock tempo of 120 beats per minute . The song is written in the key of C major . The song has the following chord progression , C ? C7 ? C.

Cyrus said of the lyrics , " If you download " Back to Tennessee " and listen to the whole song , you 'll hear exactly how I felt after four years of Hannah Montana , and living in Los Angeles and giving up my previous life and existence and who I am and where I come from . You 'll hear a guy who 's immersed in music , and my love and desire and need to go back home . " Jon Caramanica of The New York Times interpreted the song as an apology " both to [ Cyrus 's ] teenage self and , by

extension , to the daughter under his wing . " Both Caramanica and Alison Stewart of The Washington Post took interest in the lines , " Great big town / So full of users " . Caramanica said the line recognized that " fame is illusory " and " talk [ ed ] about some of his daughter ? s famous friends " , while Stewart interpreted the line as a description of Hollywood life in general .

= = Critical reception = =

The song received generally positive reviews from critics . Shelly Fabian of About.com said , " There 's a special quality to this single that might be able to help people get past ' that one song ' from Billy Ray Cyrus 's past and realize there 's so much more to the man than something from two decades ago . " While reviewing the Hannah Montana : The Movie soundtrack , Heather Phares of Allmusic said the song " fits in smoothly with an acoustic version of Rascal Flatts ' witty ' Backwards ' " . Jon Caramanica of The New York Times said , " His hard @-@ won insight is the next best thing to a good swaddle . " Allison Stewart of The Washington Post described " Back to Tennessee " as a " fusillade of strident twang rock track " . She added that the song was " eager " and that it explained " Country as Country Can Be " . Yahoo ! Music thought the song was followed Back to Tennessee 's message " too literally " . The song was included on the short list for Best Original Song at the 82nd Academy Awards , but failed to achieve a nomination .

= = Chart performance = =

In the United States , " Back to Tennessee " failed to reach the Billboard Hot 100 , the country 's main singles chart , but charted on the country @-@ genre chart . In the week ending March 7 , 2009 , " Back to Tennessee " debuted at number fifty @-@ nine on Billboard 's Hot Country Songs . " The Climb " , by Cyrus ' daughter , Miley Cyrus , debuted at number forty @-@ eight the same week , the first time a father and daughter had separate charting songs on the chart since Johnny Cash and Rosanne Cash charted in 1990 with " Silver Stallion " and " One Step over the Line " , respectively . On the week ending April 25 , 2009 , the song reached its peak at number forty @-@ seven on the chart .

= = Music video = =

The music video for " Back to Tennessee " was directed by Declan Whitebloom and premiered on March 12 , 2009 on CMT . It was partially shot in Malibu , California , where Cyrus wrote the song . Like the song , the video represents Cyrus ' desire to return home . Cyrus explained , " When I see the video for ' Back to Tennessee , ' there 's a lot of emotion there . It 's a combination between the Hannah Montana movie and going back to the actual spot where I wrote the song . I wrote the song in Malibu , and we went back to Malibu to film the video . I had never done a video exactly where I wrote the song . Then we take my little blue truck from the movie and travel back across the country . Again , it becomes a very articulate picture of what that song 's about . It 's everything a video is supposed to be . "

Cyrus 's " little blue truck " is the blue 1990 Ford Ranger that he drove in the film , which was transported to California to be used in the video . The video prominently features clips of Hannah Montana : The Movie , particularly the scene in which Cyrus performs " Back to Tennessee " . Cyrus 's backup band in that performance includes part of Taylor Swift 's band , Bucky Covington , and Marcel . About the video as a whole , Cyrus said , " I hope when people , you know , watch the video . I hope that they can feel what this song is about . I hope they can relate to that in their life and their world . "

The video commences with the Hannah Montana : The Movie performance , in which Cyrus and his backup band perform atop a stage in a crowded barn . The video then switches to its principal setting , which features Cyrus on a beach at sunset . Cyrus is seen in a black T @-@ shirt tossing rocks at the ocean and looking at a picture of a blond woman . The woman is portrayed by Melora Hardin , who plays Lorelai , Robby Ray 's love interest in Hannah Montana : The Movie . As the

video progresses , Cyrus is also seen with the blue Ford Ranger , either driving it or leaning against it while playing an acoustic guitar . The video also includes clips of Lorelai , Robby Ray , Miley Stewart , and Miley Stewart 's love interest , Travis Body . The video ends with Cyrus , looking down , walking next to the seashore .

= = Live performances = =

Cyrus performed " Back to Tennessee " as part of the AOL Sessions on April 13 , 2009 . He also performed the song and several others in a London Apple Store on April 24 , 2009 . The set , along with some songs by Miley , were recorded and sold exclusively by the United Kingdom iTunes Store as an extended play titled iTunes Live from London . On August 1 , 2009 , Cyrus performed the song at the 2009 Hannity Freedom Concert , a concert supporting the Freedom Alliance Scholarship Fund .