

= Tuscan Leather =

" Tuscan Leather " is a song recorded by Canadian recording artist Drake for his third studio album , Nothing Was the Same ( 2013 ) . It was written by Drake along with Anthony Palma and Noah Shebib , who produced the song under his production name " 40 " . The song heavily samples " I Have Nothing " performed by Whitney Houston and written by David Foster and Linda Thompson @-@ Jenner , who received writing credits on " Tuscan Leather " . Noted for its unique song structure devoid of any choruses , it is a hip hop song which utilizes influences of R & B and ambient throughout its composition .

" Tuscan Leather " received critical acclaim from music critics , who highlighted the song 's production and praised Drake 's growing confidence . The song was a source of controversy due to the song 's lyrics describing Drake 's deteriorating relationship with label mate Nicki Minaj . Despite not being released as a single , " Tuscan Leather " managed to chart due to the release of the album , with its highest peak being at number 23 on the U.S. Billboard Hot Rap Songs .

= = Background = =

" Tuscan Leather " was written by Drake , Anthony Palman , and Noah Shebib , and was produced by Drake 's longtime collaborator Noah " 40 " Shebib . It borrows its name from the Tom Ford cologne of the same name , which generally ranges from \$ 220- \$ 535 . The song utilizes a vocal sample from " I Have Nothing " , written by David Foster and Linda Thompson @-@ Jenner , who receive writing credits , and performed by Whitney Houston . It also contains interpolations of " Serious " , written by Warren McGlone and Lawrence Parker , and samples " When Seasons Change " ( live ) by Curtis Mayfield .

It was recorded at Noble Street Studios in Toronto and Metalworks Studios in Mississauga , Ontario , along with Tree Sound Studios in Atlanta , Georgia and Marvin 's Room in Hollywood , California . " Tuscan Leather " was recorded by Shebib and Noel Cadastre , while the pair received assistance from Luke Neveille , Jeff Crake , Miguel Scott , and John Nettlesbey . Lindsey Warner assisted Noel " Gadget " Campbell Toronto 's Studio 306 in mixing the song . Background vocals for the song were provided by Cappadonna , while Shebib handled all the instrumentation . However , Adrian " X " Eccleston played the guitar , and additional drum programming was done by Matthew " Boi @-@ 1da " Samuels and Nineteen85 .

= = Composition = =

Musically , " Tuscan Leather " is an atmospheric and free @-@ form hip hop song , which contains elements of R & B and ambient , and features " woozy " synth washes , big drum sounds , and an expansive , engrossing beat . Structurally , " Tuscan Leather " revolves around a distorted sample of " I Have Nothing " by Whitney Houston chopped , sped @-@ up , and reversed three different ways . Will Lavin of Gigwise said the song sounded " like a Heatmakerz @-@ produced track circa 2001 , the three key beat changes keeps listeners plugged in to the transparent mood Drake finds himself in . " " Tuscan Leather " has a unique song structure , with three distinct sections and no choruses . The first section features Drake intensely rapping while Houston 's voice , described as " ghostly and beautiful " , floats as if on helium through the chaotic production , noted to be " nostalgic , new , exuberant and menacing " all at once . After a brief pause , the section showcases a shift in both the beat and the lyrics , becoming more sinuous and personal , while a gentle keyboard riff rises underneath the music . During the third verse , the music transforms into a " soft , ambient landscape " which includes crowd noise , before the song finishes with the voice of Curtis Mayfield addressing fans at the end of a 1987 concert in Montreux :

As hell below , I 'll see you when you get there

Are you enjoying yourself ?

If we may we 'd just like to close off with something a bit inspirational

Hopefully something a bit relevant as to us all

Are having the same fears , shedding similar tears  
And of course dying in so many years  
It don 't mean that we can 't have a good life

So we 'd like to just maybe close out with something , some food for thought

According to Andrew Unterberger of Popdust , " Tuscan Leather " is a hyper @-@ focused state @-@ of @-@ the @-@ union address about where he is at in his life . During the song he discusses his ever @-@ expanding ambitions in lines such as " On a mission tryna shift the culture " , while also dismissing those who try to challenge his supremacy : " Just give it time , we ? Il see who ? s still around a decade from now " . During the song Drake makes multiple pop culture references including Dwight Howard , University of Nevada , Las Vegas basketball , comparisons to Guy Pearce in Memento , and details of dates with Tatyana Ali . The songs lyrics also allude to a strained relationship with his label YMCMB , while some critics noted a subliminal diss towards J. Cole .

= = Controversy = =

" Tuscan Leather " generated controversy with label mate Nicki Minaj for the line : " Not even talkin ' to Nicki , communication is breakin ' / I dropped the ball on some personal shit , I need to embrace it / I 'm honest , I make mistakes , I 'd be the second to admit it / Think that 's why I need her in my life , to check me when I 'm trippin ' , " Speaking of the line , Drake said in an interview with MTV News : " That line in ' Tuscan Leather ' isn 't exactly where I am in my life right now , but like a year ago ... eight months , seven months ago , it was how I felt , I 'd done something wrong , and I wasn 't speaking to her . "

Throughout their careers Drake and Minaj maintained a close personal and business relationship , and were frequent collaborators . However , while recording Nothing Was the Same , Drake did not work with Minaj or anyone from Cash Money Records , leading her to say : " I 'm Young Money ' til the death of me , Drake can do what Drake do , but Nicki Minaj is a whole different person . I think your team is your team . Who gives a fuck about trying to be different ? I 'm always going to want my team to be a part of my project , no matter what , in some way . "

Speaking of their strained relationship during an interview with Hot 97 @. @ 5 , Minaj said : " It gets a little hard to have a real connection when people are on different sides of the world , working on different things . You just never know who people got in their ear or what they 're feeling or maybe they felt wronged in some way . I don 't know . I just know that Drake is my baby , and Wayne is my everything . " However , Drake said their relationship has improved , and credited the song as opening up a new dialogue , saying : " I think the dialogue actually between us was already opened up , I had already solved that issue . I wrote that a while ago , and I kinda felt guilty changing it . It was a sentiment that I had when I started this album and felt like that 's how it should be . The album should start one place and end in another ... I haven 't talked to her since it 's been out . I 'm not sure . I haven 't spoke to her . "

= = Critical reception = =

Upon release , " Tuscan Leather " received critical acclaim from music critics , recognizing it as one of the most powerful intros to a hip @-@ hop album in years . In her review of the album , Erika Ramirez of Billboard said of the song : " Drake is aware of his greatness , and makes sure listeners are just as aware from the jump . " Andrew Unterberger of Popdust commended the song for being a strong opener , similar to his other album opener 's ; " Fireworks " and " Over My Dead Body " . Unterberger praised the use of the Whitney Houston sample , and finished his review as saying : " How much time is Drake spending on the intro ? As much time as he goddamn pleases , and if he wants to go an hour on the beat , we ? Il listen for the whole thing and not check our watch once . " Writing for Spin , Brandon Soderberg included " Tuscan Leather " as one of the " Rap Songs of the Week " , calling it " expertly conceptualized " and praised it as properly introducing the album . Will Lavin of Gigwise gave the song a positive review , noting Drake 's in depth discussions about his label , his friends , and his peers . Lavin went on to say : " For Drake , when it comes to album

openers , his track record is thought provokingly flawless . "

Thomas Britt of PopMatters praised the production on " Tuscan Leather " and noted a rare self-aware utterance " that positions Drake next to a movie character " . The A.V. Club 's Evan Rytlewski said the song : " opens the record with a six minute rush of beat flips and kinetic spitting , a reminder of how well Drake can rap when a track demands it . " The Globe and Mail reviewer Brad Wheeler said that Drake was " rewriting the rules " by including no choruses , and called Shebib and Drake 's work on the track " bodacious " . David Berry of the National Post called " Tuscan Leather " the best song on Nothing Was the Same , praising Drake 's smart wordplay and Shebib " going Picasso " on a Whitney Houston sample . Writing for Idolator , Bianca Gracie said the song showed a more confident Drake , noting that he channels Jay-Z with " bold lyrics " and a " dizzying production " reminiscent of Kanye West circa 2004 . Robert Copsy of Digital Spy also noted a significant growth in confidence , and called the song : " a piece of atmospheric self-reflection that sets up his current mindset : an artist with plenty of ambition but with a constant nagging fear about losing his way . "

= = Credits and personnel = =

#### Recording

Recorded at Noble Street Studios in Toronto , Metalworks Studios in Mississauga , Ontario , Tree Sound Studios in Atlanta , Georgia , and Marvin 's Room in Hollywood , California .

Mixed at Studio 306 in Toronto , Ontario .

#### Sample

Contains a sample of " I Have Nothing " performed by Whitney Houston and written by David Foster and Linda Thompson .

Contains interpolations of " Serious " written by Warren McGlone and Lawrence Parker .

Contains samples from " When Seasons Change ( Live ) " by Curtis Mayfield .

#### Personnel

Credits adapted from the liner notes of Nothing Was the Same , OVO Sound , Young Money , Cash Money , Republic .

= = Charts = =

Despite not being released as a single , " Tuscan Leather " managed to enter a handful of charts worldwide . During the week of October 5 , 2013 , the song debuted and peaked at number 183 the UK Singles Chart . In the United States , " Tuscan Leather " debuted and peaked at number 81 on the Billboard Hot 100 , number 33 on the Billboard Hot R & B / Hip-Hop Songs and number 23 on the Billboard Hot Rap Songs .