

= Return the Favor =

" Return the Favor " is a song by American recording artist and songwriter Keri Hilson . The song features Timbaland , who wrote the song with Hilson and her songwriting / production team The Clutch , as well as Walter Milsap . Following the moderate international chart success of Hilson 's lead single , " Energy " , " Return the Favor " was released from Hilson 's debut album , In a Perfect World ... , serving as the international second single while the urban single , " Turnin Me On " was released in the US .

As Hilson 's second vocal collaboration with mentor Timbaland , Hilson stated the purpose of the song 's initial conception was to re @-@ create the success of their worldwide hit , " The Way I Are " , as Timbaland called the " Return the Favor " bigger and better . Contemporary critics gave the song mixed reviews , noting the production and vocal similarities to " The Way I Are " , preferring the latter track .

The song reached the top twenty in the United Kingdom , Ireland , and Germany , while appearing in the top thirty of Austria and Sweden , charting in Australia and the tip charts in Belgium . The accompanying music video implements a futuristic concept and features Hilson sporting several extravagant outfits .

= = Background = =

When Hilson talked to Digital Spy about the song , she said that Timbaland called her and said , " I 've got a song that I think 's better than ' The Way I Are ' . I think it 's bigger . " They took the track and wrote " Return the Favor " over the beat . According to Hilson , she said that song was partially inspired by " that conversational , back @-@ and @-@ forth thing " they did on " The Way I Are " , stating , " We got a great response from that that we wanted to do it again . " The initial draft of the hook featured the line " If you kiss me then I ? ll kiss you back " , but according to Hilson in an interview with That Grape Juice , it was changed by unknown reason by Timbaland . After it was reported that In a Perfect World ... would be pushed back to October 2008 , " Return the Favor " surfaced online , and it was rumored to be the follow @-@ up to " Energy . " The sample was later removed by Hilson 's management , before it was announced as the album 's second single . The song was featured on December 15 , 2008 episode of The Hills .

= = Composition and critical reception = =

" Return the Favor " is described as an electro @-@ dance @-@ pop record , with a future @-@ like sound , including euro @-@ style synths . Dan Nishimoto of Prefix Magazine noted that the song includes Timbaland 's " signature dizzying 22nd @-@ century flair that he 's been employing ever since 2006 . " Andy Kellman of Allmusic noted the song as a standout track from In a Perfect World According to J.K. Gleib of Cincinnati Metromix said the song has " cascading synths , " and a " classic pop structure . " However Gleib said that Hilson 's vocals " feel flat against the driving beat " and that Timbaland " fully phones it in . " While noting the song " follows the same blueprint " of Nelly Furtado 's " Promiscuous " , Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine said it was a " satisfying pop romp " and said even though Hilson lacked Furtado 's distinctiveness , that it " shouldn 't have a problem striking a chord at radio . "

Nick Levine of Digital Spy said , the song was " a perfectly decent slice of midtempo Timba @-@ pop , but it 's not really in the same league as the brilliant ' The Way I Are ' . " MTV Buzzworthy said " slightly less out @-@ there are the beats -- which sound an awful lot like Hilson and Timbaland 's first collaboration , " The Way I Are " ? and the cameo from Timba himself .. " Sophie Bruce of BBC Music thought that the song lacked the a catchy hook such as in " The Way I Are . " Less than impressed with Timbaland 's rapping and " less than sexy " vocal appeal , Jon Caramanica of The New York Times said the " unfortunate pairing " was reprised , and the song " encapsulates the record 's shortcomings . "

== Chart performance ==

" Return the Favor " was the most successful in the United Kingdom and Ireland , peaking at nineteen in both countries . In Austria , the song debuted and peaked at twenty @-@ five on the Austrian Singles Chart , before falling off after six weeks . On the Swedish Singles Chart , It debuted and peaked at thirty , before falling off after six weeks on the chart . In Belgium , " Return the Favore " appeared on Belgian Tip Charts , peaking at six in Flanders , and seventeen Wallonia . While debuting and peaking at twenty @-@ one on the German Singles Chart , it completed nine weeks on the chart before falling off . It made the lower regions of the ARIA Singles Chart appearing at eighty .

== Music video ==

The music video was directed by Melina , who directed Hilson 's video for " Energy . " A preview of the video was released on October 14 , 2008 , and the full video premiered on October 23 , 2008 . Featuring a futuristic concept , the video begins with a small clip from Timbaland and Hilson 's " The Way I Are " , before it cuts to Hilson dancing in a future @-@ like room while scenes are shown on a wall behind Timbaland , who is seated in a chair . Hilson is then show in a pink ruffled bra and dress dancing in front of mirrors , and then rises out of a pool in a blue swimsuit while scenes continue to be broadcast behind a seated Timbaland . Intercut with scenes with previous attire , Hilson performs ensemble choreography with dancers while wearing a black bra and pants , whilst the video ends with several different scenes .

MTV Buzzworthy commended the video , stating , " while her ensemble 's slightly more unwearable (we 're looking at YOU , futuristic metallic onesie !) Hilson still manages to look beyond gorge . But then again , this chick could look cutting @-@ edge in a giant pickle barrel . " The review also compared Timbaland 's look a cross between Run D.M.C. and The Matrix .

== Track listing ==

== Personnel ==

Songwriters - Timothy Mosley , Keri Hilson , Ezekiel Lewis , Bulewa Muhammed , Patrick Smith , Candice Nelson , Walter Millsap III

Production - Timbaland

Editors - Walter Millsap III , Dave (d @-@ lo) , Marcella Araica

Recording - Scott Naughton

Mixing - Demacio Castellon

Vocal arrangement - The Clutch

Additional production , vocal production - Walter Millsap III

Source

== Charts ==

== Release history ==