

Darian Church

Dr. Gordon Phan

English 110C

2 October 2024

One Wish

The song “One Wish” by Ray J, released in the mid-2000’s. This song is about Ray J’s one wish, which is to be together with the woman that broke up with him. It is a song that symbolizes the longing and forgiveness of a man that wants a second chance. The song’s use of repetition, figurative language, pathos, and imagery is created to draw in the audience’s emotions.

Repetition

The song displays a high content of repetition to emphasize the Ray J’s desire for a second chance with this woman. The main testament to this is Ray’s statement of his “one wish” that he would make from a genie in a bottle. This statement serves two purposes in the song. One is to emphasize his devotion and longing towards the woman who has his heart. The second is to highlight the woman’s specialness among other women and objects to him. This is supported by evidence in common folklores that genies have three wishes, however Ray J is content with only one wish if he does not get all three. Additionally, there is the recurring unmentioned mistake that Ray J wishes to “make (...) right this time” (1:28-31). His repeated indication of this mistake assists his want to correct past actions he has made. These words are said to evoke the emotions of heartbreak and regret in the audience.

Figurative Language

The metaphor “I was a fool” is utilized to describe his stupidity and thoughtlessness at letting her go (0:35-39). The sentence is an indication of his regret from the past relationship. It shows that he has reflected on his past actions and wanted to take responsibility, so that she could forgive him. Furthermore, he conveys that his hopes that what he is feeling is not “make believe” (1:59-2:02). This comparison between his “feeling” and “make believe” is used show his denial of not having love toward her.

The phrase “make you my whole life” is a use of hyperbole that makes one things of a forever relationship (1:25-27). This phrase gives off feelings of devotion and commitment that Ray J has and wanted to express to this woman. Moreover, the thought of making someone your whole life carries the responsibility of caring for them, protecting them, and being with them through everything, which is a one Ray J is willing to hold.

Imagery

Ray J’s use of imagery in his song takes the purpose of trying to rekindle emotion from his lost partner. Through, going back to the past Ray J tries to make a connection with this woman by making her remember the time they were “sitting at home in your mama’s living room” and “couldn’t be alone (0:24-29). This is a ploy to remind her of how inseparable they were and how much love they had back in their teenage years. It created a sense of nostalgia in the audience hearing about their past and how they could keep away from each other. Furthermore, mid song Ray J tries to convey that if they do not get back together, he would need to “check (...) into some kind of clinic” (2:09-12). This indicates that he would fall sick if he

could not be with her. And his desperation shows by illustrating that he would be forever torn up without her.

Pathos

Pathos is heavily utilized in all love songs to connect with the emotions of the audience. Throughout the song Ray J displays repeated use of affectionate and passionate words and phrases to make the audience feel his love to the woman. Ray Js repeated saying of “love would never end” and “have us a baby,” show his want for a future with this woman (1:04-06)/(1:22-24). These phrases show the audience that Ray does indeed want to spend the rest of his life with her. It builds emotions of hope and awe in the audience for Ray J to achieve his one wish.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the song is a primarily used as a heartfelt apology towards the woman of Ray J desires. Through repetition, figurative language, pathos, and imagery, Ray J transforms the song from a just music to an experience of loss and serenade for the audience. The audience being a combination of people in relationships that the song serves as a warning toward people who may take it for granted. And, fans of R&B who like to enjoy love song, with smooth beats. The end of the song makes listeners reflect on the song as a whole to make them think. If they are doing something wrong in a relationship or causing dismay for their partner, to fix it before their relationship end prematurely. Not only does Ray J exhibit a tone of candid and romance toward his past and wanted future relationship with this woman, but it also shows longing and desperation toward his past regrets.

Work Cited

Ray J. "One Wish." *Raydiation*, Sanctuary Records, 2005. YouTube,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VblcPN0eYw&t=4s>