



A Question and an Answer

For almost six years, the world had no new music from Adele. Then, in October 2021, she released a new song, "Easy on Me." On the day it was released, the song broke a world record: It was streamed 24 million times.

In many ways, "Easy on Me" is like Adele's other hit songs—her voice is beautiful, the lyrics are poetic, and the song's theme is heartbreak. But in one way, this song is different. In her previous songs, Adele sang not just about herself, but about another person. For example, in the song "Someone Like You," she sang about visiting an old boyfriend to remind him that "for me, it isn't over." In "Hello," she sang about old boyfriend who didn't answer her "thousands" of phone calls. But in the song "Easy on Me," she sings mostly about herself.

After many years together, and after having a son together, Adele and her husband divorced. Adele says she wasn't miserable in the marriage, but she wasn't happy, either. She felt she had to leave. After the divorce, her nine-year-old son asked her a simple question: "Why don't you love my dad anymore?"

"I do love your dad," she answered. "But I'm not *in love* with him." She realized later that her answer probably didn't make sense to him. So she decided to answer his question in a song.

In the song's first verse, Adele describes her marriage as a river that had no gold in it. In the second verse, she says that she wanted to "put you both first," so she tried to change who she was—but she finally gave up. Finally, she tells her son that she had "good intentions and the highest hopes." But she knows that "right now that probably doesn't even show." In the song's chorus, she reminds her son that she was young when she met his father. It was a time when she had just become world-famous, and she had "no time to choose what I chose to do."

Does Adele think the song answers her son's question in a way he can understand? Probably it doesn't. But she hopes that when her son is in his 20s or 30s, he will listen to the song, and he will understand then. Above all, she hopes that as time goes on, he—and perhaps others, too—will "go easy" on her.

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