Who doesn’t love a good song? Songs and music have been around for many years. Songs can show someone’s feelings, tell a story, or be just for fun. There are many uses of songs. Modern day songs can even be paralleled to plays and novels such as *The Labyrinth* by Jim Henson. This novel tells a story of a young girl named Sarah who wishes her baby brother Toby away to the Goblin King. Not knowing if it would happen or not, it does and now she must go into a place unknown to her and find her brother and save him before it’s too late. Audiences today may relate this story to modern music and how Sarah has this journey that she must go on. Sarah starting her journey, meeting new people that she must learn to lean on, and finally finding herself and her strength can be related to such songs as “Pioneer” by The Band Perry, “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers, and “Invincible” by Kelly Clarkson.

In the beginning of the novel Sarah must set out on a journey to the unknown to find her brother; The Band Perry’s song “Pioneer” parallels with this part of the novel because it speaks of not knowing where they are going, but they’re going anyways, just like Sarah. Sarah is so tired of having to keep her baby brother and listen to his crying that she wishes him away to the Goblin King. She regrets what she has done after she realizes that he is gone and now must get out on a journey to rescue him. The Goblin King, Jareth, tells Sarah what she must do to rescue her brother. At first, she says she can’t do it and is very hesitant about going to the castle. She eventually tells Jareth, “Tell me where I start” (Henson 39).
Readers could imagine Sarah saying the lines of “Pioneer”: “Where are we going/ Oh I don’t know/ But still I’ve got to go” (7-9). Though she doesn’t know where she is going or what she is getting herself into, she must go and find Toby. All throughout Sarah’s journey Jareth tries numerous times to make her give up, but it never works and she keeps pushing on. The song could parallel here with the lines that say, “Send the dark but it won’t break me/ You can try but you can’t change me” (32-33). She can be seen telling Jareth that no matter what he throws at her, she will make it through. Overall, Sarah can be seen as a pioneer in that she would go anywhere she had to, to find her brother.

Through Sarah’s journey in The Labyrinth she meets people who she must learn to lean on for help to make it through; Bill Withers’s song “Lean on Me” is a perfect illustration in showing that no matter what, everyone needs someone to lean on at times. Sarah is in a place unknown to her and she doesn’t know how to get through the labyrinth. At first, she tries to do everything on her own but later realizes that she does in fact need some help. Throughout the labyrinth Sarah does get help, but not the kind of help that gets her anywhere. Readers see one instance where Sarah needs the help of her new-found friends when they finally make it into the gates where the castle is and they must get away from the goblins. Sarah must trust that they will stay by her side and help her get through it. Sarah speaking to Sir Didymus tells him, “hold them back for as long as you can” (Henson 172). He reply’s with, “Twill be the greatest pleasure of my life, fair maid” (Henson 172). Though he didn’t know her for long, he was willing to risk his life to help her. Sir Didymus could be seen singing the lines from Bill Withers song: “Lean on me, when you’re not strong/ And I’ll be your friend” (5-6). He’s letting her know that she can lean on him whenever she needs to. This song also parallels with the ending of the novel once Sarah has returned home and is telling all of them goodbye. Sir Didymus tells Sarah, “And remember, sweetest damsel, shoudst thou ever need…” (Henson 185). Sarah doesn’t let him finish, but readers could imagine him saying the lines of Withers:
If there’s a load you have to bear
That you can’t carry
I’m right up the road
I’ll share your load. (Withers 25-28)

He’s telling her that if there was anything she should ever need that he would always be there for her.

Sarah’s journey made her realize, that like the song, you always have someone to lean on.

Through all the trials Sarah faced in the Labyrinth, she finally found her strength and herself; Kelly Clarkson’s song “Invincible” can parallel perfectly with Sarah’s new-found strength because the song tells of how someone was broken but now they feel invincible. Sarah was torn down by the Goblin King time after time, he made her feel as if she couldn’t make it through and she should just give up. One instance where the readers can see that Sarah has found her strength is when they finally make it into the castle and Sarah tells the others, “I…I have to face him alone” (Henson 191). Though she needed help up until this point, she believes she must now face Jareth alone. She now has confidence that she can do it by herself. Sarah tells Jareth, “you have no power over me” (Henson 198). She can be seen saying with great excitement the lines of Clarkson’s song: “Now I am invincible/ No, I ain’t a scared little girl no more” (11-12). Jareth put so many obstacles in Sarah’s way but she still managed to make it through and find her brother. Readers could imagine Sarah saying the these lines from “Invincible”: “Beat down on me, beat down like a waterfall/ “Cause I can take on so much more than I’ve ever dreamed” (7-8). She could be seen as saying that no matter what you put in my way or how much you throw at me, I can keep going on. Overall, through Sarah’s journey she found a strength she didn’t know she had and became invincible.
Songs can be used for many different things such as expressing one’s feelings, telling a story, and can even be paralleled with scenes of novels. All different genres of music can be paralleled with scenes from the novel *The Labyrinth* by Jim Henson, from country all the way to soul. Many modern-day songs can be used in showing the journey Sarah went on, the fact that she had to learn to lean on others, and how she finally found her own strength. Throughout her journey she made new friends and became a strong young woman.

Works Cited

Clarkson, Kelly “Invincible” AZ Lyrics


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Withers, Bill “Lean on Me” AZ Lyrics