

= Smile ( Lily Allen song ) =

" Smile " is the debut single by British recording artist Lily Allen from her debut studio album *Alright, Still* ( 2006 ) . It was written by Allen , Iyola Babalola and Darren Lewis , while sampling The Soul Brothers ' " Free Soul " . The song was released as the lead mainstream single of the album in July 2006 . After signing a contract deal with Regal Recordings and gaining popularity on the social network website Myspace with demo songs , Allen released a limited edition of " LDN " to promote her work and afterwards announced the release of " Smile " .

The song incorporates rocksteady music , as the lyrics tackle her dealing with the betrayal of her boyfriend , while enjoying his misery . Most contemporary critics complimented the song , noticing the confidence it hides and the carnival @-@ esque , yet melancholy , theme . On the other hand , some considered it was not one of the album 's best tracks and it makes the singer a " theoretical pop princess " . The single peaked inside the top 40 of the charts of some European countries and Australia , while staying on the summit of the UK Singles Chart for two consecutive weeks and ended the year as the country 's 11th most successful song . It is also charted on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 , where it was certified gold .

For promotion , " Smile " was re @-@ recorded in Simlish and played on shows ; it also received its own answer song . The accompanying music video portrayed a revenge theme , with Allen hiring a posse to beat her ex @-@ boyfriend . It was directed by Sophie Muller and , afterwards , banned on MTV due to obscene language . The song was performed live many times , including on talk shows , her 2007 concert tour and also during her 2009 concert tour , though Allen claimed to be " sick " of it . In 2008 , it won a Pop Award at the London Broadcast Music Incorporated Awards .

= = Background = =

After meeting George Lamb on a holiday in Ibiza , Allen made him her manager . Lamb later introduced the singer to production duo Future Cut , with whom she had written and produced demos , which were sent to various labels . In 2005 , Allen was signed to Regal Records , who gave her £ 25 @,@ 000 to produce an album . The singer considered it to be a " small development idea " , as they were also unable to provide much support for it due to their preoccupation with other releases . Taking advice from Lady Sovereign , the singer created an account on MySpace and began posting demo songs in November 2005 . By March 2006 , they attracted thousands of listeners , and 500 limited edition 7 " vinyl singles of one of the demos , a song titled " LDN " , were rush @-@ released and sold for as much as £ 40 . Allen also produced two mixtapes to promote her work . As she accumulated tens of thousands of MySpace friends , The Observer Music Monthly took interest . Few people outside of her label 's A & R department had heard of Allen , so the label was slow in responding to publications who wanted to report about her . Her label wasn 't pleased with the sound of the demos , so they assigned the singer to " more mainstream producers and top @-@ line writers " . After that , they finally approved some of her songs , being confident of their inclusion on the album . " Smile " was among the chosen ones , that Allen claimed she was happy with . It was the first song she had ever written , claiming :

When I set out to do this I knew I wanted to make songs that sounded a ) up to date and now and b ) really organic . Because you can 't get really good players without spending loads of money these days , the only other option is to sample . The first song I ever wrote was ' Smile ' . We just went through about seven or eight sample lyrics , found a beat , put it all in ... Then when it comes to writing lyrics I write ... like a rapper would , I suppose , with absolutely no melody involved whatsoever , I 'm just getting my flow sorted . Then I write the whole text of the song and then ad lib the melody into the microphone . It 's not terribly clever !

" Smile " was released as a single , and the maxi single format for it contains two B @-@ Sides , " Absolutely Nothing " and " Cheryl Tweedy " , which Allen struggled to get on the album , but lost them in favour of " Take What You Take " . The latter is a satirical song about celebrity , finding the commercial promotion side of the celebrity machine uncomfortable , while mentioning Girls Aloud member Cheryl Tweedy , but argued she doesn 't " have anything against her " .

= = Music structure and lyrics = =

Musically , " Smile " is a bubbly , mid @-@ tempo tune with " a barroom piano lick " , subdued horns and a reggae beat , singing in a light falsetto , while the organ riff contains a sample of Jackie Mittoo playing keyboards on the 1960s rocksteady song " Free Soul " by The Soul Brothers , also written by Mittoo . He and Clement Dodd received credit on the song as co @-@ writers . It was described to have a " cod @-@ reggae groove that smoulders like a barbecue " , as a guitar and piano were used for the background music , following the notes Gm ? F as its basic chord progression . It is set in the time signature of common time , having a metronome of 96 beats per minute , and is played in the key of F major . Lyrically , the song describes Allen 's satisfaction in her former lover 's suffering , being in a vengeful mood : " At worst / I feel bad for a while , / But then I just smile / I go ahead and smile , " thus creating a contrast between " the peppy melody and brassy lyrics " . The inspiration for the song came from a real life experience , when Allen broke up with her then boyfriend , Lester Lloyd , resulting in a drug overdose and hospitalization for her depression . The singer claimed " I started to get depressed and anyone who suffers from depression knows that it can soon get so bad that you can 't get out of bed . It was then that I checked into the Priory . That was really tough as I was an emotional mess . [ ... ] The lyrics are definitely bitter @-@ sweet " . Allen said she later regretted the direct approach of her lyrics :

I 'm now less inclined to do that , because everything that I do say gets repeated in a way that I haven 't said it , or taken out of context and spun in some negative way ? and it makes me really sad . I 'm not , like , a negative person . I 'm actually quite positive , but this industry has really made me feel angry and negative recently . I 'm not enjoying it at the moment .

= = Critical reception = =

" Smile " was met with mixed to positive reviews from music critics . According to Heather Phares of Allmusic , the song " has a silky verse melody that just barely conceals [ the singer 's ] spite " , while she keeps " her revenge sweet , the extra sting being given to it by the way she sounds like she 's singing about how ice cream or puppies or being in love makes her smile " . Blender reporter Jon Dolan claims that Allen " deploys a sugary melody as a Trojan horse for a smackdown on a douche @-@ bag ex @-@ boyfriend " , as Rob Webb from Drowned in Sound called " Smile " an " infectious slice of bouncing , carnival reggae that punches hard with its opening line : ' When you first left me / I was wanting more / But you were fucking that girl next door / What you do that for ? , ' " and went on to say that the theme of the song is melancholy , " set against breezy beats " , and while not being " an obvious TOTP contender on the surface , [ it ] is good but far from one of the LP 's choice cuts " . Rob Sheffield from Rolling Stone gave a rather negative review , claiming the singer " doesn 't sound as if she 's trying too hard " , singing the song with a " breezy sha @-@ la @-@ la lilt that just made the song seem even nastier " . Later , he called Allen a " theoretical pop princess , who just entered the breakup @-@ song hall of fame " . Dom Passantino of Stylus suggested that " ' Smile ' gets burned off the lights by both Sean Paul and Abs when it comes to facsimiles of ' Uptown Top Ranking , ' but neither of them could bring the quality of lyricism the singer does , " while Slant Magazine reporter Sal Cinquemani was baffled as to why the song , which she " sings without a smirk of irony " , is a UK chart @-@ topper .

The reviewer from NME considered that the song sashays along with sass , while still remaining charming , and said that though it doesn 't mark Allen out as excellent dating material , as a soundtrack to the summer , " it ? s a dead fackin ? cert " . Adrien Bégard of PopMatters called " Smile " just as good as " LDN " , " its loose reggae arrangement augmented by the clever sample of Jackie Mittoo ? s piano from the Soul Brothers ? 60s rocksteady tune " Free Soul " , as Allen sings bitterly about her ex , with just a hint of vulnerability at first , before going to her friends for reassurance , and confronting the guy during the chorus with a mean @-@ spirited confidence that has us cheering inside " . While John Murphy of MusicOMH praised the song and its " gently lilting reggae rhythm " , Priya Elan from NME considered that the Althea & Donna groove of " Smile " is

what made fans " fall for her in the first place ". The former argued that " even people who profess to hate pop music will secretly be tapping a foot to it and claiming it is just downright perfect pop for lolling around during the lazy warm , guaranteed to cheer the listeners up , no matter how down they 're feeling " . Other reviews came from The Guardian reporter Sophie Heawood , who didn 't consider the song as Allen 's greatest effort , but still thought she was far better than being called " the female Mike Skinner " .

In October 2011 , NME placed it at number 104 on its list " 150 Best Tracks of the Past 15 Years " .

= = Commercial performance = =

" Smile " was released to the iTunes Store in the United Kingdom in the spring of 2006 and spent its first week at number 1 on the iTunes chart , before entering the main UK Singles Chart at number thirteen , based on download sales alone . The next week , on the issue of 15 July 2006 , it rose to the summit of the chart , selling 39 @,@ 501 copies , knocking Shakira 's Hips Don 't Lie off the top spot and spending two consecutive weeks there . It later descended to number four , being replaced by McFly 's Please , Please . It was her very first single in her home country 's main charts , following a top 40 entry with the limited release of " LDN " the same year . It ended 2006 as UK 's 11th best selling single of the year . Allen was surprised at the success of it , stating : " Of course , I never thought the record would chart - I didn 't even think I 'd get a record contract " . She was named " one of the brightest hopes for domestic crossover rap " because of this single . The song shared similar success in Ireland , where it debuted on the issue of 6 July 2006 and peaked inside the top ten at six , holding on the chart for nine weeks . In mainland Europe , it broke the top 40 of most countries , but wasn 't as successful as in the singer 's home country . Notable successes were ten on the Dutch Top 40 , sixteen on the French Singles Chart and 21 on the Swiss Singles Chart . Across the ocean , " Smile " reached 14 on the ARIA Charts and in New Zealand peaked inside the top ten at six .

In North America , the song only managed to peak at 49 on the main Billboard chart in the U.S. on the issue of 24 February 2007 and spent 12 weeks on the chart . On the same week , it climbed to 29 on the Hot Digital Songs and , later in May , reached 35 on the Pop Songs and 20 on the Hot Adult Top 40 Tracks . Despite its low position , " Smile " managed to slowly sell over 500 @,@ 000 copies in paid digital download and was certified Gold by the Recording Industry Association of America on 9 February 2009 ; it remained Allen 's highest @-@ charting single in the country until " 5 O 'Clock " which featured Allen , peaked at number 10 in 2011 . Nonetheless , " Smile " remains Allen 's highest @-@ charting song as a solo artist in the United States , as well as one of three entries ( after " Fuck You " and " The Fear " ) . It also peaked at 86 on the Canadian Singles Chart .

= = Music video = =

The song 's music video was released on 3 July 2006 . Having been directed by Sophie Muller , it contained a vengeance theme , similar to that of the song . It starts off with Allen sitting on the bed in her apartment , eating chocolate and cheeseballs . Interleaved , there are shots of her and her ex @-@ boyfriend spending time together appear as a memory . He is played by Elliott Jordan . As the bridge comes up , the scene changes to the singer standing on the corner of a street , talking to a man and paying him money . The man leaves and goes to some gangsters , giving them instructions and each a share of money . As Allen 's former lover walks down the street talking on his mobile phone , one of the gangsters pushes him into an abandoned playground ; where they are joined by a second gangster , and the pair give Allen 's ex a beating . In this time , Allen , witnessing the scene , smiles . She then meets with her bruised ex @-@ boyfriend , and takes him to a coffee shop . There , he tried to explain to her how he was beaten by the muggers , not knowing that , meanwhile , they were breaking down his apartment door and destroying his furniture and possessions , including scratching his gramophone records . The ex @-@ boyfriend leaves the table for a while , enough time for Allen to put laxative pills in his coffee ; upon returning , he drinks it and leaves the shop . After , he goes to his apartment , only to find it trashed and destroyed .

Scavenging through what 's left , he happily finds the record box , thinking they are intact , but he suddenly gets diarrhoea as a result of the laxatives , but is unable to use his toilet , as it is clogged with his clothes . He goes to Allen 's apartment with his records , seeking consolation , unaware that she is laughing behind his back . As the video finishes , the scene changes to Allen walking down the street , at night , smiling , singing the last chorus , while her ex @-@ boyfriend , actually a disc jockey , is in a nightclub , getting ready to put his music , but finds out that all his records have been scratched .

After the video was banned on MTV in the United Kingdom , Allen commented regarding this in an interview :

I got really offended when my single ' Smile ' got banned [ during after @-@ school hours ] from MTV in the U.K. because it had the word fuck in it . They said , ' We don 't want kids to grow up too quickly . ' But then you have Paris Hilton and the Pussycat Dolls taking their clothes off and gyrating up against womanizing , asshole men , and that 's acceptable . You 're thinking your kids are gonna grow up quicker because they heard the word fuck than from thinking they should be shoving their tits in people 's faces ?

DJ Ron Slomowicz of About.com criticised the music video , saying it was " mean @-@ spirited " , it would " alienate any sort of club fan base she might discover " , and that if a male " had his friends beating up his ex @-@ girlfriend , trashing her living space , drugging her and destroying her possessions , he would be branded as violent " and would be shunned , thus questioning the singer 's taste level .

= = Live performances and promotion = =

On the day the single was released , Allen appeared on BBC Radio 1 's Live Lounge with DJ Jo Whiley , performing an acoustic version of " Smile " , and a cover of The Kooks ' song , " Naïve " . At the Secret Garden Party , in September 2006 , Allen made a rendition of the song and afterwards stated : " The festival was well good , particularly as Lester , my ex , who I wrote ' Smile ' about , and subsequently sold his story to the papers , had a tent called ' the shit tent ' positioned directly opposite the main stage . So he and his new girlfriend had no option but to watch me perform to a couple of thousand people singing ' Smile ' back to me . Oh , it 's the little things eh ! " " Smile " was performed live as part of the setlist of Allen 's 2007 concert tour . During the 2007 South By Southwest music festival , Allen said " I 'm so sick of this song , but I 'll play it for you , Austin " before singing it . On 3 February 2007 , the singer was invited as a musical guest on Saturday Night Live and played this single and " LDN " . In 2009 , it was on the setlist of Allen 's 2009 concert tour , as part of the encore .

= = In popular culture = =

= = Covers = =

" Smile " received its own answer song when rapper Example recorded a track called " Vile " in 2006 , from We Didn 't Invent the Remix , with tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek lyrics written from the boyfriend 's perspective . While it also features elements from Keith Allen 's single " Vindaloo " , Example added " I think Lily has heard the track . I gave it to her producer to play to her . We just did it for a laugh . Hip @-@ hop artists take life too seriously . " Upon hearing the reply single , Chris Moyles , from BBC Radio 1 , recorded his own parody version of the song for The Chris Moyles Show . Allen herself re @-@ recorded the single in Simlish , the fictional language used in The Sims games , to help promotion . The Simlish version was used in the Sims expansion pack The Sims 2 : Seasons soundtrack , and Allen also had her own character in the game . She declared : " Recording ' Smile ' was a great experience for me . Sometimes revenge can be fun . But getting to sing it again [ in Simlish ] came very naturally and it was hilarious to practice ! The silly language and whimsy of The Sims games are a perfect fit for the song . I was laughing the entire time ! " Also

, an animated music video was made for the Simlish version .

== Media ==

" Smile " appears on another video game soundtrack , that of Thrillville : Off the Rails , which is a theme park simulation . Among other citations , the song is present in the film He 's Just Not That Into You and featured on the 2007 Judd Apatow 's film Knocked Up and on the soundtrack . In 2009 , the season one episode " Mattress " of the Fox musical comedy / drama Glee , " Smile " was covered by the character Rachel , voiced by Lea Michele ; the version was made available as an iTunes single download and was later included on the second volume of the season one soundtracks .

In the first scene of the first episode of Big Bang Theory Penny is listening to Smile in her apartment when Leonard and Sheldon first meet her .

== Track listings and formats ==

== 2009 versions ==

== Credits and personnel ==

== Charts and certifications ==