

= Dear Jessie =

" Dear Jessie " is a song by American singer Madonna from her fourth studio album Like a Prayer (1989) . It was released as the fifth single from the album on December 10 , 1989 by Sire Records . Written and produced by Madonna and Patrick Leonard , the song was inspired by Leonard 's daughter Jessie . The release of " Dear Jessie " was limited to the United Kingdom , certain other European countries , Australia and Japan . The track is composed more like a children 's lullaby rather than a pop song , and features strings , synthesizer and strummed acoustics . A change in tempo occurs during the breakdown , where instrumentation from trumpets is included . Lyrically , the song evokes a psychedelic fantasy landscape , in which pink elephants roam with dancing moons and mermaids .

Upon its release , " Dear Jessie " received mixed reviews from critics , who complained about the overdone fantasy imagery of the song , but complimented its composition . Other reviewers likened the composition and performance to the style of The Beatles . The track was a moderate success commercially , reaching the top 10 in the United Kingdom and Ireland and the top 20 in Germany , Spain and Switzerland . The music video of " Dear Jessie " combines live action and animation , portraying a little girl waking up in bed and interacting with fantasy characters . Madonna appears in the video only as an animated , Tinker Bell @-@ type fairy .

= = Background = =

When Madonna started work on her fourth studio album , Like a Prayer , she was in an emotional state of mind following her divorce from Sean Penn , her 30th birthday and unfavorable reviews for her acting endeavors . She had certain personal matters on her mind that she thought could be the musical direction of the album . As Madonna considered her alternatives , producers Patrick Leonard and Stephen Bray experimented with instrumental tracks and musical ideas for her consideration . One day , while recording of the title track was going on at Jonny Yuma Studios , producer Patrick Leonard had to pick up his daughter Jessie from school and , since his wife was out of town , had to bring her back to the studio . Madonna , who was initially angry with Leonard for his late arrival , struck up a rapport with Jessie . She commented : " It was like as if I was my mother and [she] was me . We were playing in our backyard again . " Witnessing their connection , Leonard approached Madonna with a song he had written for his daughter , titled " Dear Jessie " . Madonna changed some of the lyrics and agreed to record the track for Like a Prayer ; it was finished within the next three days .

" Dear Jessie " was released as the fourth single from Like a Prayer in Europe , while it served as the fifth single from the album in Australia and Japan ; it was never released in the United States . The single cover used a photo from 1987 , taken by Herb Ritts . It showed Madonna in bed , clutching a bed sheet to her bosom and sporting a pair of Minnie Mouse ears . The photo was a reference to the early criticism of Madonna 's work , when reviewers had described her voice as " Minnie Mouse on helium " .

= = Composition = =

According to Rikky Rooksby , author of The Complete Guide to the Music of Madonna , " Dear Jessie " sounds more like a children 's lullaby than a pop song . A baroque and psychedelic pop song , it begins with the sound of strings , ushering a joyous melody , with Madonna singing in a full voice . The verses are sung without any background vocals to accompany Madonna 's voice . However , in the chorus , when she sings the lines , " Pink elephants and lemonades , Dear Jessie hear the laughter raining on your love @-@ parade " , a different set of vocals are interwoven with hers , continuously chanting the words " La @-@ la " . Synthesizer and strummed acoustics are added during the second verse , followed by the repetition of the chorus , when a change in tempo and time signature occurs , followed by the sound of a child 's laughter .

As Madonna finishes singing the intermediate lines , " Close your eyes , sleepy @-@ head , It is

time for your bed , Never forget what I said , Hang on ... " , a trumpet starts playing alongside the main rhythm . The breakdown has the feel of Spanish music , with the glissando evoking the string arrangements . This is followed by the bridge and the chorus being repeated twice . " Dear Jessie " ends with all instrumentation and vocals fading out , except the orchestra , which is equalized to make it sound very thin and trebly , as if coming out from a distorted radio . The lyrics encourage the little girl Jessie to use her imagination . It summons up a psychedelic landscape , where pink elephants roam with dancing moons and mermaids . It references fairy @-@ tale characters and creates an image of children playing with each other .

According to the sheet music published by Alfred Publishing Co . Inc . , " Dear Jessie " is written in the time signature of common time , with a tempo of 120 beats per minute . Normally written in 4 ? 4 , the song has a change in time signature after the second chorus , changing it to 3 ? 4 . It is composed in the key of D major , with Madonna 's voice ranging from C3 to D5 . The song 's chord progression follows a sequence of Bm ? A ? Bm ? D ? A in the verses and changes to D ? Bm ? G ? A ? D in the chorus .

= = Critical reception = =

Author Santiago Fouz @-@ Hernández commented in his book Madonna 's Drowned Worlds that to him the song felt like a trepidation of Madonna 's thoughts about what might be termed " girlhood " and on a broadscale , on " femininity " . Christopher P. Andersen , author of Madonna : Unauthorized , described " Dear Jessie " as " a wistfully psychedelic confection of carousels and pink elephants " , adding that " the song harkens back to the lullabies your mother must have sang to you " . Robin Anne Reid , author of Women in Science Fiction and Fantasy : Overviews , complimented the fact that " although the sort of fantasies that [Madonna] conjures might trend towards the kinky and sexual , she can also delve into a world of mermaids , fountains of youth , leprechauns and magic lanterns as is evident by ' Dear Jessie ' . "

Lucy O 'Brien , author of Madonna : Like an Icon , characterized the song as " harkening back to a childlike innocence " , but felt that Madonna overdid the elaborate fantasy imagery . O 'Brien preferred Madonna 's later attempts to sing lullaby @-@ like songs on her 1994 and 2003 albums , Bedtime Stories and American Life . Edna Gunderson from USA Today called the song a " sugary lullaby " , while opining that it would not go down as one of Madonna 's well @-@ remembered songs . The Chicago Tribune 's Ian Blair described the track as " bouncy " and praised the soothing quality of the music 's composition . Richard Harrington from The Washington Post deduced that with the song , Madonna was harkening back to her own maternal emotions , the feelings she could not receive from her own mother , due to her untimely death . Reviewing the Like a Prayer album , Mike Mentos from Los Angeles Daily News was not impressed with " Dear Jessie " and commented that " Madonna 's voice possesses neither the control , power nor emotion to carry neo @-@ baroque experiments like ' Dear Jessie ' and ' Oh Father ' . "

A number of reviewers have compared " Dear Jessie " to the work of The Beatles . Allen Metz , one of the authors of The Madonna Companion : Two Decades of Commentary , described the composition of the song as " pastel @-@ pretty , [and] richly orchestrated " . He felt that the song would have fit better on The Beatles ' 1969 soundtrack album , Yellow Submarine . The Beatles influence was also noted by Stephen Holden from The New York Times , who labeled " Dear Jessie " a " stylish swatch of late Beatles @-@ style psychedelia " . Joey Levy from Spin characterized " Dear Jessie " as " amazing " , describing his reaction to the song as " Wow ! This is neat ! " He added that the song sounded like Prince singing for The Beatles ' 1967 album Sgt. Pepper 's Lonely Hearts Club Band . Kevin Phinney from the Austin American @-@ Statesman compared the song to the solo work that Beatles ' member John Lennon did later in his career . Phinney wondered how Madonna was able to come up with the song , since most of the tracks from Like a Prayer are full of innuendo and double meanings .

= = Chart performance = =

In the United Kingdom , " Dear Jessie " debuted at number nine on the UK Singles Chart , for the issue dated December 16 , 1989 . After two weeks , it reached a peak position of number five on the chart , staying there for another two weeks . It was present on the UK Singles Chart for a total of nine weeks , and was certified silver by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) for shipment of 200 @,@ 000 copies of the single . According to Official Charts Company , the song has sold 255 @,@ 000 copies in the UK as of August 2008 . In Australia , the song reached number 51 on the ARIA Singles Chart , remaining there for two consecutive weeks . On the international chart for Japan , " Dear Jessie " reached the top 40 , but could not move up above number 25 . In Germany , the song reached a peak of number 19 on the chart , but it remained within the German Top 100 for a total of 19 weeks . In Ireland , the song reached a peak of number three , remaining on the chart for a total of six weeks . The song failed to reach the top 20 in Austria , and was present on the chart for two weeks . It also failed to reach the top ten in Spain and Switzerland , reaching a peak of number 17 and number 16 , respectively . " Dear Jessie " entered the Dutch Top 40 at number 37 , ultimately reaching a peak of number 25 . On the Pan @-@ Eurochart Hot 100 Singles , compiled by Music & Media , " Dear Jessie " peaked at number nine .

= = Music video = =

The music video was produced by Animation City , an animation company in London , England , and was directed by Derek Hayes . The video is mainly animated and does not feature Madonna , except as the cartoon fairy Tinker Bell . Along with Hayes , there were six animators who worked on creating the fantasy imagery . It was included on the 1990 promotional @-@ only video compilation She 's Breathless .

The video opens with a shot of a little girl sleeping in her bed . As the music starts , rays of light emanate from the bedside radio with cartoon violins playing the music . The sun rises inside a picture on the wall and the girl wakes and starts playing with her doll . A fairy goes around tapping all her toys on the floor and a large , golden teapot comes alive and shoots a rainbow from its spout . A cartoon version of the girl then slides along the rainbow and , interpreting the lyrics of the song , catches a falling star and rides over the moon .

By the second verse , pink elephants float over the girl 's bed and an animated fairy version of Madonna emerges from the picture and winks . She takes the little girl through another picture , displaying mythological and fairytale beings such as dragons , princes and unicorns as well as a castle where Madonna dances with the moon . An underwater scene with mermaids and fish follows , then a parade of all the girl 's toys around her room . As the song wraps , the fairy taps on the girl and causes her to yawn . She falls asleep again and her toys go back to being as they were . The violins and the instruments gradually fade inside the radio and the song ends .

= = Track listing and formats = =

UK 7 " single / 7 " picture disc

" Dear Jessie " ? 4 : 20

" Till Death Do Us Part " ? 5 : 09

UK 12 " single / CD single

" Dear Jessie " ? 4 : 20

" Till Death Do Us Part " ? 5 : 09

" Holiday " (12 " version) ? 6 : 20

= = Credits and personnel = =

Madonna ? songwriter , producer

Patrick Leonard ? songwriter , producer , arranger , mixing

Bill Meyers ? arranger , mixing

Chuck Findley ? arranger , trumpet

Nadirah Ali ? background vocals
Rose Banks ? background vocals
Guy Pratt ? drum programming , synthesizer
Paulinho da Costa ? percussion
Herb Ritts ? cover art photographer
Credits and personnel adapted from Like a Prayer album liner notes .

= = Charts and certifications = =