

= Littlest Things =

" Littlest Things " is a song by British recording artist Lily Allen from her debut studio album , *Alright* , *Still* . Written by Allen , Mark Ronson and Santi White , the song was released as the third single of the album on 11 December 2006 by Regal Recordings . It incorporates a piano sample from Pierre Bachelet and Herve Roy 's music from *Emmanuelle* , for which they were credited as co @-@ writers , as the lyrics tackle the singer dealing with the departure of her boyfriend , while reminiscing about their time together . The song was created in a New York studio , after Allen had met Ronson , who was impressed by her previous work and offered her different samples .

Contemporary critics gave the song mixed reviews , some claiming it to be Allen 's sweetest lyrical moments , while others accuse it of being a fraud . The single peaked at number twenty @-@ one on the UK Singles Chart , being her first single not to reach the top twenty in the United Kingdom . The accompanying music video portrayed a view over the mundane moments of a dying relationship , with Allen watching herself and her ex @-@ boyfriend together . It was directed by Nima Nourizadeh and was mainly shot in black and white . The song was performed live during her 2007 concert tour and also during her 2009 concert tour .

= = Background = =

After obtaining commercial success with first two singles , " Smile " and " LDN " , Allen decided to promote the album by releasing " Littlest Things " . The song was composed in New York , where Allen travelled after she had met producer Mark Ronson when at lunch with her then boyfriend , Seb . There , she told him she was a singer and gave him a copy of her demo CD . He was impressed by her song " Smile " and asked her to work together . Regarding the process of composing the song , Ronson stated :

We spent a day together and worked on a couple of things , and went to record shops where I played samples to her . Then I wrote the piano and guitar bit to " Littlest Things " , and she sat down and scribbled for about an hour and finished the lyrics . We went into the booth to record the song . She originally wanted to do a Mike Skinner thing , rapping the verse and singing the chorus . But I asked her to sing it all , and she just made up the whole melody on the spot , and sang this amazing solo . At that moment I realised that this girl has a really special gift .

In regards to composing the song and its lyrical meaning , Allen noted that ,

Mark 's got a very good ear . He 's very relaxed in the studio and very thoughtful . There 's not really any pressure working there , because he 's got his own studio so he doesn 't have time constraints .

The song was called " Littlest Things " and was about having broken up with my boyfriend , because Seb and I had split up for a few months . We 've since got back together . It must have been quite awkward for Mark because Seb was his friend , but being fresh out of a relationship I wanted to write about what was on my mind .

Mark came up with the music first , then I came up with the words and we fitted it all together into a melody . That 's the way I normally make songs ? I write everything in the studio ? and it obviously means that producers are very important to me . It 's a complete joint effort .

= = Music structure and lyrics = =

Musically , the song is written in the time signature of common time and set in the key of A minor , having a metronome of 82 beats per minute . It has a basic sequence of Am ? D7 ? G ? Em ? Am ? F # 7 ? B as its chord progression , while the piano and guitar are used for the background music . " Littlest Things " samples elements from " *Emmanuelle in the Mirror* " and the " Theme from *Emmanuelle (Instrumental)* " , which are written by Pierre Bachelet and Herve Roy for the 1974 French softcore pornographic film *Emmanuelle* . It does not , though , sample " Karma Police " by Radiohead , contrary to popular misinterpretations . The lyrics describe a post @-@ relationship overview and the way one reminiscences about it . Alex Petridis from *The Guardian* describes them as dealing with " misery and sex in equal measure " , while reporting that Ronson asked Allen to

sing in her London accent .

= = Critical reception = =

" Littlest Things " has met mixed reviews ; Heather Phares from AllMusic complimented the song , saying the ballad softens Allen 's rough image and celebrates " the mundane moments of a dying relationship " , whereas Blender reporter Jon Dolan considers it a " forlorn single " , where the singer writes about the terror of being in a relationship " with white @-@ knuckled worry over a snip of florid piano from a ? 70s soft @-@ core porn flick " . Sal Cinquemani of Slant Magazine criticised Allen for being a " poser who lacks charisma , bites off of everyone else , and is so sickeningly contemptuous of everyone but herself that it makes the pretty , melancholy piano @-@ and @-@ drum @-@ loop ballad ' Littlest Things ' seem like a farce " . While analysing Alright , Still , The Guardian reviewer , Sophie Heawood , described the lyrics as the " perfect description of missing someone : ' We 'd spend the whole weekend lying in our own dirt / I was just so happy in your boxers and your T @-@ shirt ' . " Mark Pytlik from Pitchfork Media gave a positive review , saying that " ' Littlest Things ' is a supple piano @-@ tickler that provides one of Allen 's sweetest lyrical moments while simultaneously leaving Ms. Dynamite in the dust on the R & B balladeering front " . He believed that the song is made out of Allen 's " comfort zone " of songs such as " Smile " , the result being of " high order , if not a bit more erratic " . IGN reviewer Todd Gilchrist named the song as the album 's " most affecting tune " , while thought it " compiles a sad and beautiful checklist of the intimate moments she no longer shares with her dearly departed boyfriend " .

= = Commercial reception = =

The single debuted at number fifty @-@ three in the singer 's home country and later rose to twenty @-@ one , which became its peak . It was Allen 's lowest position on the UK Singles Chart at that time , being the only song to miss the top twenty , until " Who 'd Have Known " peaked at thirty @-@ nine in 2009 . Though it did not enter the main chart in the Flanders region of Belgium , the single obtained position thirteen on Ultratip , a continuation of the chart .

= = Music video = =

The music video was directed by Nima Nourizadeh and released on 11 December 2006 . It opens with an aerial shot of a piano which begins to play by itself , and then moves to reveal a film set . Allen stands on a lamppost , wearing a raincoat , with lights , a camera and directors surrounding her . The image zooms into the camera from the studio and turns the video black @-@ and @-@ white , with the story coming to life , as the singer begins the first verse . From the lamppost she is able to see her former self walking down the street with her boyfriend . While they enter a building , a light comes out in one of the windows , revealing their silhouettes kissing . The caption changes , with the two of them dancing , while a man plays the piano in the background ; as he dips her and holds this position , she continues to sing . The camera zooms out to see a heart shaped window surrounding the two that opens and changes to a picture on Allen 's wall . She is alone in a room , staring at a mirror . Her hair is let down and she is wearing a white nightgown . The piano is seen again playing itself , as the image shifts to the window , where Allen is again portrayed leaning against the lamppost in the street , as in the beginning of the video . She again looks at the silhouettes in the window of the building , as it collapses on her , once again changing the scene . This time , the singer is looking through another window , and then turns around to a mirror which captures a door . The former Allen with the raincoat walks through with her boyfriend , as their shadows are seen kissing . The image changes to Allen from the film set , zooming out from the camera 's viewing piece , making the video in colour again .

= = Track listing = =

= = Credits and personnel = =

Lead vocals ? Lily Allen

Written by ? Lily Allen , Mark Ronson , Santi White

Writers of sample ? Pierre Bachelet , Hervé Roy

Produced by ? Mark Ronson

Recorded by ? Mark Ronson , Rob Smith

Assistant recording ? Kieran Panesar

Drum programming & samples ? Mark Ronson

Percussion ? Mark Ronson

Mastered by ? Tim Burrell , Tim Debney

Audio mixing ? Vaughan Merrick

= = Charts = =