

Twitter Thread by Richard S. He ■■■■



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[@rsh_elle](#)



"drivers license" is all in 4/4, but uses some VERY creative phrasing to create a sense of suspense! cc [@SwitchedOnPop](#) [@Top40Theory](#) [@TheDanielNigro](#)

each verse is 7 bars long, with 6 lines and one bar of rest. Your ears expect 8, but you get an odd number. (1/5)

[Verse 1]

I got my driver's license last week
Just like we always talked about
'Cause you were so excited for me
To finally drive up to your house
But today I drove through the suburbs
Crying 'cause you weren't around

Rodrigo sings the last line, "Crying 'cause you weren't around," then her voice drops out, leaving you in the emptiness of the music...

But then, a piano chord pitchshifts down as the next section starts up a bar early, as if she's interrupted by her own thoughts. (2/5)

similarly, each chorus is 10(!) bars long. The first four lines are two pairs of 3 bars, which is pretty uncommon...

But just as you get used to it, the last two lines have twice as many syllables - and cut off the chorus unresolved in only 2 bars! (3/5)

[Chorus]

And I know we weren't perfect

But I've never felt this way for no one

And I just can't imagine

How you could be so okay now that I'm gone

Guess you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me

'Cause you said forever, now I drive alone past your street

The bridge is more conventional, with two sets of 8 bars. It's the only part of the song that feels familiar and predictable. Olivia's going nowhere, stuck in her past memories. (4/5)

[Bridge]

Red lights, stop signs

I still see your face in the white cars, front yards

Can't drive past the places we used to go to

'Cause I still fuckin' love you, babe (Ooh, ooh-ooh, ooh, ooh-ooh)

Sidewalks we crossed

I still hear your voice in the traffic, we're laughing

Over all the noise

God, I'm so blue, know we're through

But I still fuckin' love you, babe (Ooh, ooh-ooh, ooh, ooh-ooh)

In the final chorus, she repeats the last line, resolving the song with 3 sets of 4 bars.

It's neater, but it's still not symmetrical. Where any other song would give you a chorus of 16, "drivers license" doesn't give you the satisfaction. Brilliant pop songwriting. (5/5)

[Chorus]

I know we weren't perfect

But I've never felt this way for no one

And I just can't imagine

How you could be so okay now that I'm gone

Guess you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me

'Cause you said forever, now I drive alone past your street

[Outro]

Yeah, you said forever, now I drive alone past your street

listen for yourself! As catchy and 4/4 as it is, it's surprisingly difficult to count along with the phrasings

<https://t.co/rZoao7Hrd9>

P.S. I myself wrote a big pop song with a 7-bar chorus and 10-bar finale - coming up with that organically is still one of my proudest creative moments ■■■■

<https://t.co/hfO8P5BF4o>

OH, and [@Olivia_Rodrigo](#) sings the same phrasing in her early demo of the song! Musical prodigy incoming (6/5?)

<https://t.co/Md8bQdfnvi>

[@ThreadReaderApp](#) unroll