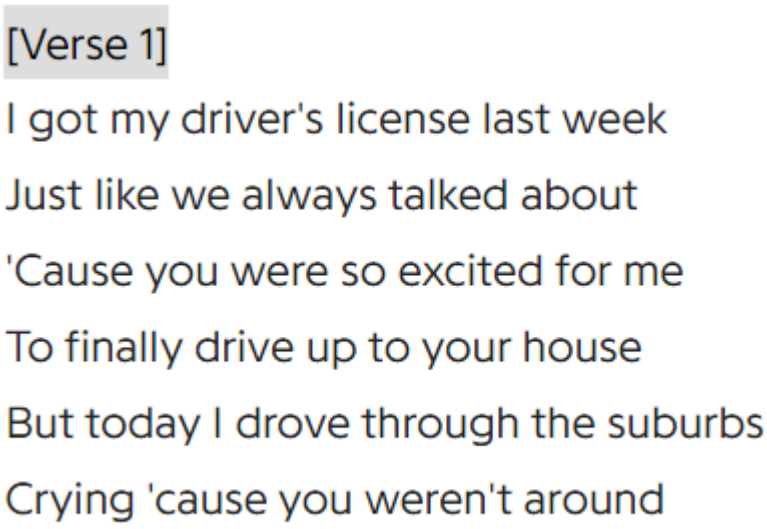
Twitter Thread by Richard S. He ■■■

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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)



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)

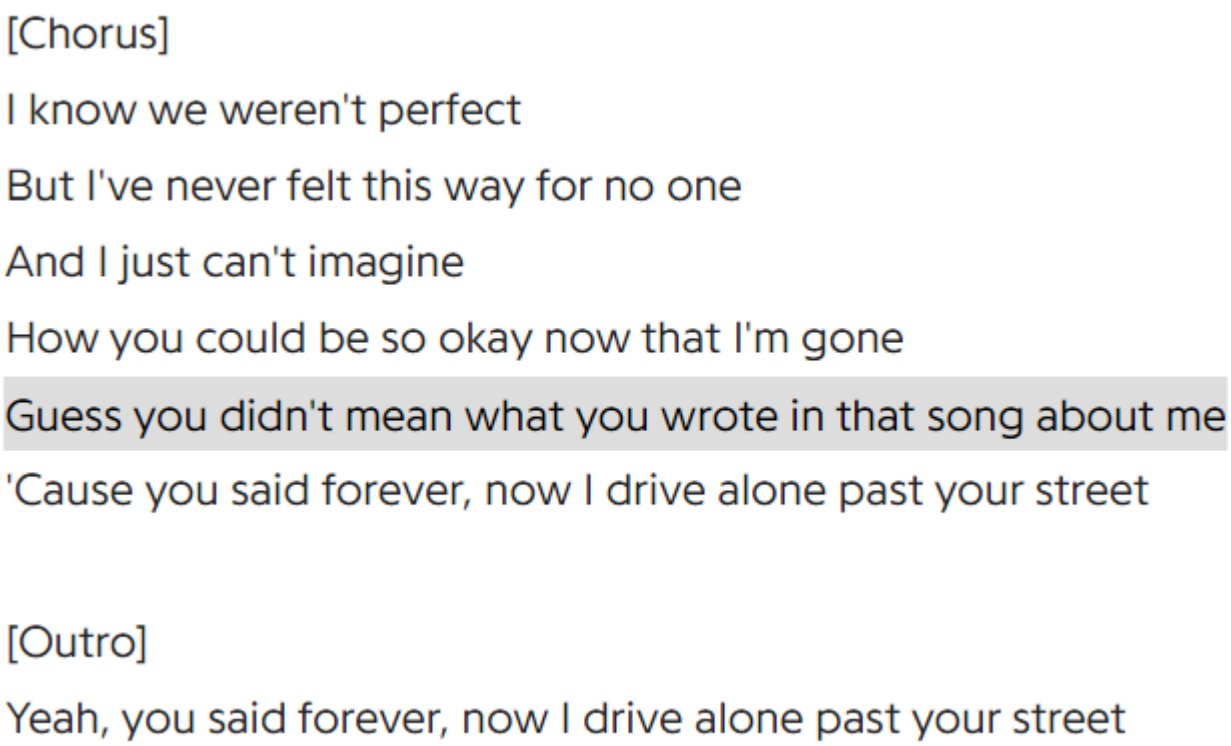
[Chorus]
And I know we weren't perfect
But I've never felt this way for no one
And I just can't imagine
How you could be so okay now that I'm gone
Guess you didn't mean what you wrote in that song about me
'Cause you said forever, now I drive alone past your street

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)



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