

TUNE INTO ENGLISH

Harry Styles'

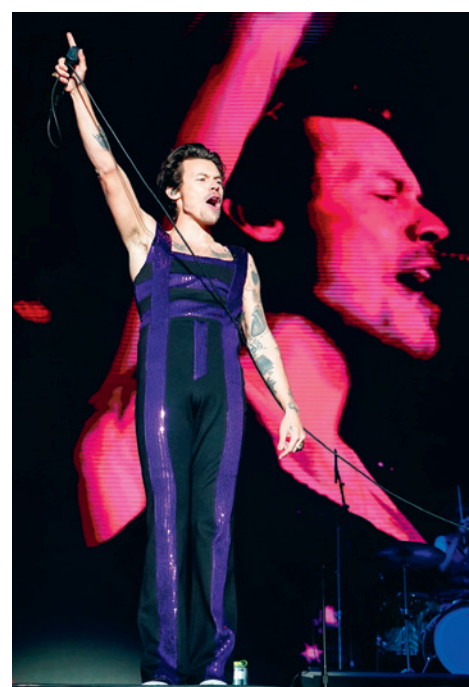
As It Was



Il primo single dell'ultimo album, scritto durante il lockdown, è un brano orecchiabile dalle note romantiche ma anche introspettivo, in cui l'ex membro dei One Direction allude a tematiche profonde, come i rapporti sociali e la solitudine.

The first single from Harry Styles' third album *Harry's House* has been phenomenally successful. Released in April this year, "As It Was" immediately became his second No.1 hit¹ in the US and the UK, remaining at the top² of the charts³ for ten weeks in a row⁴ and breaking the record for Spotify's most-streamed track⁵ in a single day. The platform describes the song as "a complex love song about losing one's self⁶, finding one's self, and embracing⁷ change." Lyrically, the song is entirely in the present tense (apart from the title!), both simple and continuous. The track opens with a voicemail⁸ from Harry's five-year-old goddaughter⁹, who would call every evening during lockdown to say goodnight to her uncle. The song itself is influenced by Styles' experience of loneliness¹⁰ and alienation in this period. In the first verse he reflects on how he feels held back¹¹, unable¹² to move on¹³. He reveals that he is alone and unable to replace¹⁴ the person to whom the song is addressed. The second verse is an introspective look at his life in isolation, intercepted by a telephone call from someone who is concerned¹⁵. The lyrics of the bridge¹⁶ caused the most controversy on Twitter. Fans of the singer have speculated that these lines are a

reference to American actor Olivia Wilde, with whom Styles is romantically linked¹⁷. The song's chorus is a statement¹⁸ on how much life has changed in recent times, described by Styles as a "metamorphosis". In an interview with Apple Music he said, "All of the things happening in the world, it was so obvious that you just can't go backwards¹⁹... You learn so much in those moments." ☺



SCAN, READ & LISTEN
06

LOWER INTERMEDIATE B1

GLOSSARY

- 1 **hit:** successo
- 2 **at the top:** in cima
- 3 **charts:** classifiche
- 4 **in a row:** di fila
- 5 **most-streamed track:** brano più ascoltato
- 6 **to lose one's self:** perdere l'identità
- 7 **to embrace:** abbracciare
- 8 **voicemail:** messaggio in segreteria telefonica
- 9 **goddaughter:** figlioccia
- 10 **loneliness:** solitudine
- 11 **to hold back:** trattenerne, bloccare
- 12 **unable:** incapace
- 13 **to move on:** andare avanti
- 14 **to replace:** sostituire
- 15 **concerned:** preoccupato
- 16 **bridge:** ponte (passaggio prima del ritornello)
- 17 **to link:** legare
- 18 **statement:** dichiarazione
- 19 **backwards:** indietro
- 20 **to urge:** spronare
- 21 **to hold out:** porgere
- 22 **filler:** riempitivo
- 23 **aware:** consapevole
- 24 **light-speed:** alla velocità della luce

holdin', nothin', ringin', doin': songs often omit the final 'g' in words, as they are easier to sing.

seems: it should be 'it seems', but songs often incorrectly leave out the subject.

you know: this is often used as a filler²², meaning you are aware²³.

get ahead: a phrasal verb meaning 'to be successful'.

wanna: an informal pronunciation of 'want to'.

"C'mon Harry, we want to say goodnight to you"

Holdin' me back
Gravity's holdin' me back
I want you to hold out²¹ the palm of your hand
Why don't we leave it at that?

Nothin' to say
When everything gets in the way
Seems you cannot be replaced
And I'm the one who will stay, oh-oh-oh
In this world, it's just us
You know it's not the same as it was

In this world, it's just us
You know it's not the same as it was
As it was, as it was
You know it's not the same
Answer the phone
"Harry, you're no good alone

Why are you sitting at home on the floor?
What kind of pills are you on?"

Ringin' the bell
And nobody's coming to help
Your daddy lives by himself
He just wants to know that you're well,
oh-oh-oh

In this world, it's just us
You know it's not the same as it was
In this world, it's just us
You know it's not the same as it was
As it was, as it was
You know it's not the same
Go home, get ahead, light-speed²⁴ internet

I don't wanna talk about the way that it was
Leave America, two kids follow her
I don't wanna talk about who's doin' it first
As it was
You know it's not the same as it was
As it was, as it was

c'mon: an abbreviation of 'come on', often used to urge²⁰ someone to do something.

leave it at that: a regularly used phrase meaning to say to do nothing more.

it's just us: we are the only ones.

as it was: 'as' means 'like', comparing now and the past.

no good: not good.

what kind of pills are you on?: the preposition 'on' is used with medication.

Scan this QR code with your smartphone or tablet and listen to the official song on YouTube while reading the lyrics.



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