

SONGS OF THE HOUSE

Volume One — Her Voice

Nos. 1-3 of 15 · Two readings, one lyric · For adults 18 and over

THE KEY I WEAR

Hers · No. 1 of 15

[Intro]

Little gold thing on a little gold chain,
catching the light when I turn my head —
everybody tells me it's pretty.
Nobody asks me what it opens.
Nobody asks me what it opens.

[Verse 1]

I bought a dress with a low enough neck
that the whole world gets to see,
and they compliment the jewellery, darling,
while you're going quiet next to me.
Your mother says it suits my colouring,
the waiter says it's fine,
and you just watch it swinging, love,
like it's the end of the line.

[Pre-Chorus 1]

And you can't say a word,
and you wouldn't if you could —
you'd just stand there being charming,
being everything you should.

[Chorus]

I wear it where they all can see,
in the open, on my collarbone —
and there's not a soul in this whole room
who knows it isn't stone.
They think it's a decoration.
They think it's just a chain.
But you and I both know, my love,
who's holding, and who came.
I wear the key. I wear the key.
And baby, you're the door.

[Verse 2]

You carry the coats, you settle the bill,
you tell the joke, they laugh, they stay —
and nobody at that table
sees the way you look my way.
They're saying what a lucky woman,

married to a man like that,
and I'm smiling and agreeing
with my fingers on the catch.

[Pre-Chorus 2]

And you're glowing, and you're steady,
and you're mine in every room —
the finest thing I ever made
and the only thing I moved.

[Chorus]

I wear it where they all can see,
in the open, on my collarbone —
and there's not a soul in this whole room
who knows it isn't stone.
They think it's a decoration.
They think it's just a chain.
But you and I both know, my love,
who's holding, and who came.
I wear the key. I wear the key.
And baby, you're the door.

[Verse 3]

It's warm from being against me all day,
it's the last thing off at night —
and the first thing that your eyes go to
when I turn on the light.
You could ask. You never ask.
That's the part that undoes me most:
a man who could and doesn't
is a man who's truly host.

[Pre-Chorus 3]

So I let it hang there, glinting,
in the middle of the day —
little private conversation
that the room can't hear us say.

[Chorus]

I wear it where they all can see,
in the open, on my collarbone —
and there's not a soul in this whole street
who knows it isn't stone.
They think it's an heirloom.
They think it's just a chain.
But you and I both know, my love,
who's holding, and who came.
I wear the key. I wear the key.
And baby, you're the door.

[Verse 4]

My sister says she loves the length of it,

my friends all want the name,
and I say oh, it's nothing special,
just something from a frame.
And you're across the kitchen listening,
drying up a plate,
and the smallest smile in England
is the one you can't quite hide.

[Pre-Chorus 4]

Because you know exactly what it is.
You put it in my hand.
You closed my fingers over it
and told me where to stand.

[Chorus]

I wear it where they all can see,
in the open, on my collarbone —
and there's not a soul in this whole world
who knows it isn't stone.
They think it's a decoration.
They think it's just a chain.
But you and I both know, my love,
who's holding, and who came.
I wear the key. I wear the key.
And baby, you're the door.

[Verse 5]

One day this will be in a box somewhere
and somebody will hold it up
and say, wasn't she elegant,
look at this little cup of gold.
And they'll never know a single thing
and that's exactly right —
some marriages are public.
Ours just looks polite.

[Pre-Chorus 5]

So come here. Let me straighten you.
Let me fix that crooked line.
Let the whole street see me touch your collar —
let them think it's fashion. Fine.

[Chorus (final)]

I wear it where they all can see,
in the open, on my collarbone —
and there's not a soul who ever guessed
it never once was stone.
They think it's a decoration.
They think it's just a chain.
But you and I both know, my love,
who's holding, and who came.

I wear the key. I wear the key.
And baby — you're the door.

[Outro]

Little gold thing on a little gold chain.
Catching the light when I turn my head.
Everybody tells me it's pretty.
Nobody asks me what it opens.
Nobody has to.
You already know.

TEN MINUTES

Hers · No. 2 of 15

[Intro]

I set a little clock down on the table.
You looked at it. You looked at me.
And I said — ten minutes, love.
Ten minutes. Starting now.

[Verse 1]

You've waited all week in a well-cut suit,
you've said the right thing every time,
you've been the best man in every room
and every room was mine.
So tonight I put my watch down
and I let the second hand begin,
and I give you what you've earned, my love —
and I don't let you win.

[Pre-Chorus 1]

Because a gift's still a gift
when it comes with a line.
You can have all of me for ten,
and the rest of it is mine.

[Chorus]

Ten minutes, darling. Take your time.
No — take my time. It's on my dime.
Hands where you want them, mouth where you please,
and one small word you don't get to say.
The clock is honest. The clock is kind.
The clock will finish. I won't.
Ten minutes, love — and when it's done,
you'll thank me for the ones you don't.

[Verse 2]

You are the finest kind of hungry:
the kind that doesn't beg.
You could ask me for forever
and instead you take the edge.
And I watch your jaw go tighter
and your breathing pick up pace,
and I keep my eyes on two things only —
the clock, and your face.

[Pre-Chorus 2]

Because there's nothing quite so beautiful
as a strong man holding still.
Anyone can want a woman.
You want me and wait until.

[Chorus]

Ten minutes, darling. Take your time.
No — take my time. It's on my dime.
Hands where you want them, mouth where you please,
and one small word you don't get to say.
The clock is honest. The clock is kind.
The clock will finish. I won't.
Ten minutes, love — and when it's done,
you'll thank me for the ones you don't.

[Verse 3]

The neighbours think we're early sleepers.
My mother thinks you're shy.
The office thinks you're focused,
and I'm the reason why.
There's a whole world out there guessing
at what makes a man like you,
and the answer's on a table in a bedroom
and it's small, and round, and blue.

[Pre-Chorus 3]

It doesn't take a lifetime.
It doesn't take a fight.
It takes ten honest minutes
and the will to stop them right.

[Chorus]

Ten minutes, darling. Take your time.
No — take my time. It's on my dime.
Hands where you want them, mouth where you please,
and one small word you don't get to say.
The clock is honest. The clock is kind.
The clock will finish. I won't.
Ten minutes, love — and when it's done,
you'll thank me for the ones you don't.

[Verse 4]

And when it sounds you step back from me
before I say a word,
and that — that right there, husband —
is the sweetest thing I've heard.
Not the wanting. Not the reaching.
Not the heat behind your eyes.
The stepping back. The empty hands.
The keeping of the size.

[Pre-Chorus 4]

So I put my palm against your chest
and I feel the engine run,
and I say, good. Now stay like that.
We've hardly even begun.

[Chorus]

Ten minutes, darling. Take your time.
No — take my time. It's on my dime.
Hands where you want them, mouth where you please,
and one small word you don't get to say.
The clock is honest. The clock is kind.
The clock will finish. I won't.
Ten minutes, love — and when it's done,
you'll thank me for the ones you don't.

[Verse 5]

Some couples spend it all at once
and wonder where it went.
Some couples hold a little back
and call it an investment.
We've been at this a long time, love,
and the fire has never dropped —
because I never let it finish,
and you never asked me to stop.

[Pre-Chorus 5]

So set it down again tomorrow.
Set it down every night.
Ten minutes of the whole of me
and a lifetime of the light.

[Chorus (final)]

Ten minutes, darling. Take your time.
No — take my time. It's always been my dime.
Hands where you want them, mouth where you please,
and one small word you'll never say.
The clock is honest. The clock is kind.
The clock has finished. I have not.
Ten minutes, love — and now it's done —
and look at everything you've got.

[Outro]

Ten minutes.
That's all it ever takes
to remind a good man
who he's good for.
Come here.
Time's up.

WEATHER

Hers · No. 3 of 15

[Intro]

It comes in like weather.
You can feel it in the room before it lands —
that drop in the air,
that hush.
And you always know it's coming.
And you never move.

[Verse 1]

There's a sky over this kitchen
that only you and I can read.
It was blue this Tuesday morning
and by evening it had changed.
You saw it in the way I set the table,
you saw it in my hands,
and you cleared the plates in silence
like a man who understands.

[Pre-Chorus 1]

It isn't temper. Temper's cheap.
Temper's just a noise.
This is slower. This is chosen.
This is weather, love. Not voice.

[Chorus]

It comes in like weather, and it changes the air,
and it finds you in the middle of the night,
and it warms you, and it moves you,
and it leaves a little mark —
and the morning's always brighter
and the morning's always clear.
You can build a whole life on a woman
who brings the weather, dear.
Rain on me. Rain on me.
I never once was cruel.

[Verse 2]

Some houses have a climate
and some houses have a fog.
Some men live their whole lives guessing
at the mood behind the door.
But you have never guessed, my love —
not once in all these years.
You always know exactly what is coming,
and that is why you're here.

[Pre-Chorus 2]

Because certainty's the kindness.
Certainty's the gift.
A storm you see arriving
is a storm you'd never miss.

[Chorus]

It comes in like weather, and it changes the air,
and it finds you in the middle of the night,
and it warms you, and it moves you,
and it leaves a little mark —
and the morning's always brighter
and the morning's always clear.
You can build a whole life on a woman
who brings the weather, dear.
Rain on me. Rain on me.
I never once was cruel.

[Verse 3]

I have a rhythm that you know by heart
though you've never seen it written down.
It starts as almost nothing —
just the sound of coming round.
And it builds the way a summer builds,
unhurried, sure, and low,
and somewhere in the middle of it
you stop pretending. There you go.

[Pre-Chorus 3]

That's the moment. That's the turn.
That's the key change in the room.
Everything before it was the sky.
Everything after is the bloom.

[Chorus]

It comes in like weather, and it changes the air,
and it finds you in the middle of the night,
and it warms you, and it moves you,
and it leaves a little mark —
and the morning's always brighter
and the morning's always clear.
You can build a whole life on a woman
who brings the weather, dear.
Rain on me. Rain on me.
I never once was cruel.

[Verse 4]

And afterward there's always sun.
That's the law in this house.
Nothing here is ever left
to sit and turn to doubt.
I put my hands where I have been

and I hold you till you're warm,
because anyone can make a storm, my love —
the art is in the calm.

[Pre-Chorus 4]

So don't you let them tell you
that the gentle ones are soft.
The gentlest thing I ever do
is what comes after.

[Chorus]

It comes in like weather, and it changes the air,
and it finds you in the middle of the night,
and it warms you, and it moves you,
and it leaves a little mark —
and the morning's always brighter
and the morning's always clear.
You can build a whole life on a woman
who brings the weather, dear.
Rain on me. Rain on me.
I never once was cruel.

[Verse 5]

They ask me what our secret is
at every dinner, every year.
And I say, oh — communication.
And everybody nods, my dear.
And you look down into your glass
and you don't say a word,
and under that whole table
is the truest thing they've heard.

[Pre-Chorus 5]

Because it is communication.
It's the clearest language known.
It just doesn't use its mouth much.
It gets straight to the bone.

[Chorus (final)]

It comes in like weather, and it changes the air,
and it finds you in the middle of the night,
and it warms you, and it moves you,
and it leaves a little mark —
and the morning's always brighter
and the morning's always clear.
You built a whole life on a woman
who brings the weather, dear.
Rain on me. Rain on me.
And I was never cruel.

[Outro]

Forecast for tomorrow:

warm, with a chance of me.
Bring nothing.
Wear nothing you're fond of.
I'll see you at eight.