SJB SELECTION

REVIEW · R&B

The Hardest Part | Olivia Dean

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The strange thing about breakups? Sometimes you don’t really miss the other person. You miss who you were when you were with them.

Olivia Dean wrote “The Hardest Part” after the end of a two-year relationship.

She could have turned it into the classic broken-heart song.

Instead she shifts the focus.

The point isn’t him.

It’s her.

She has changed.

So the question becomes harder than the breakup itself: you could even try to go back, but to which version of the relationship?

And above all, which version of you would be going back?

Musically, everything stays warm and light. The song is run through with a soul bounce that keeps the melancholy from sinking.

It’s a **luminous sadness**.

Like watching an old house in the rear-view mirror while you keep driving.

You know what it holds.

But the road goes the other way.

> ***The hardest part, in the end, isn’t necessarily leaving. It’s accepting that sometimes growing up means having nothing, and no one, you can truly go back to.***

LISTEN

The Hardest Part — Olivia Dean — is in our playlist Blue Desire: Jazz, Soul & Slow Fire.

Olivia Dean. Updated every Friday. Selected by ear.

LISTEN FIRST. SELECT SECOND.