

Stronger (What Doesn't Kill You) Deconstructed



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Artist: Kelly Clarkson

Song/Album: Stronger (What Doesn't Kill You) / Stronger

Songwriters: Jorgen Kjell Elofsson, Alexandra Tamposi, David Gamson, Greg Kurstin

Producer: Greg Kurstin

Genre: Pop

Sub Genre: Pop/Rock, Dance

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Length: 3:42

Structure: A-B-A-B-C-B

Tempo: Mid/Up (116 bpm)

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First Chorus: 0:43 (19% into the song)

Intro Length: 0:08

Outro Length: 0:13

Electric vs. Acoustic: Electric

Primary Instrumentation: Electric Guitar, Synth

Lyrical Theme: Love/Relationships & Inspirational/Empowerment

Title Occurrences: *What doesn't kill you:* 14 times. *Stronger:* 15 times.

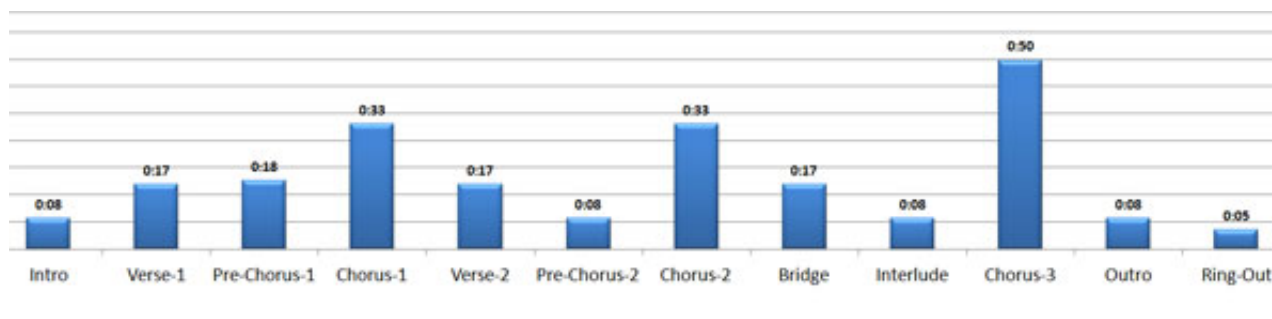
Primary Lyrical P.O.V: 1st & 2nd

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At-a-Glance

	Intro	Verse	Pre-Chorus	Chorus	Bridge	Interlude	Outro
# Of Occurrences	1	2	2	3	1	1	1
Length by Section	0:08	0:17	0:18/0:08	0:33/0:50	0:17	0:08	0:08
Section % to Total Song	4%	15%	12%	52%	8%	4%	6%

Section Length (Length of each individual section within the song)

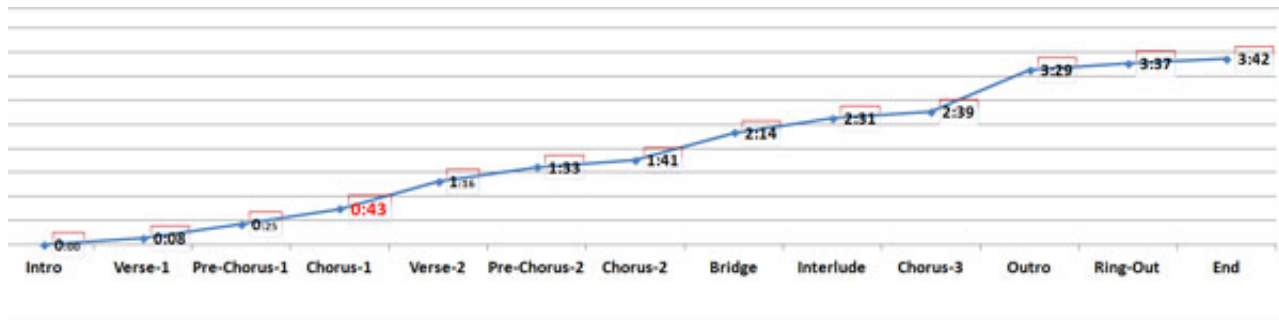


In regard to the length of each section within the song, the intro, 2nd pre-chorus (note that it's half the length of the first pre-chorus,) outro and interlude are all quite short in nature, landing at **0:08**. The verse sections, bridge and 1st pre-chorus are short to moderate in length, landing at **0:17**, **0:17** and **0:18** respectively. The longest sections within the song, (no surprise,) are the choruses, with the first two landing at **0:33** and the last chorus landing at **0:50** (note that it's 1-1/2 choruses.) The **0:05** Ring-Out is the brief fade from the last note being hit to the final conclusion of the song.

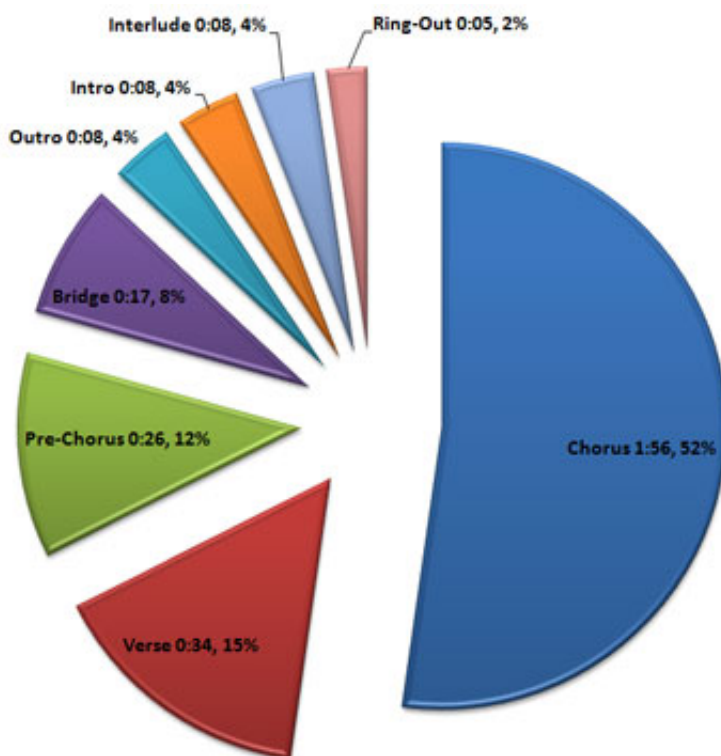
Structure Timeline (Shows when each section hits within the timeline of the song)

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Total Section Analysis (Total time consumed by each section and its percentage of the total song)



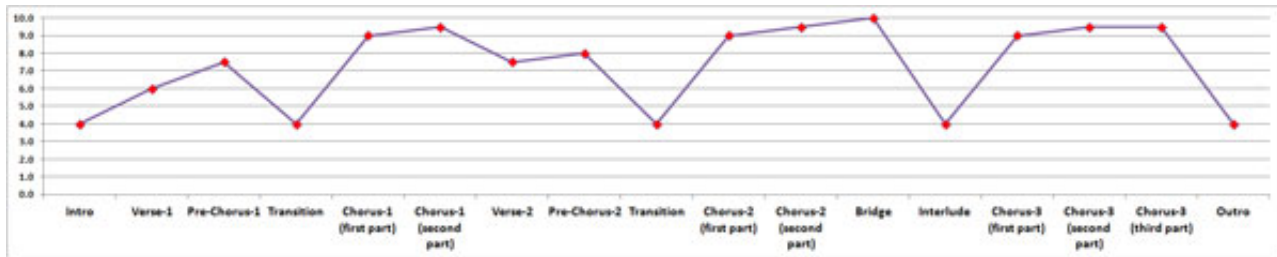
Not surprisingly, the powerful, infectious chorus makes up the vast majority of *Stronger's* structure, comprising **52%** of the total song. Far behind we have both verse sections accounting for just **15%**, the one and a half pre-chorus sections encompassing **12%**, the bridge landing at **8%** and the intro, interlude and outro each accounting for **4%** of the song's total composition.

It just goes to show – know where the real strength of your song is and stay there as long as possible!

Momentum/Intensity/Tension Factor (Evaluation of the intensity of each section within the song timeline on a scale of 1 – 10, 10 being the most intense)

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Summary:

Overall, *Stronger* is a perfect example of a Pop/Rock, Dance oriented song that's built around a huge, anthemic chorus. Aside from the solo vocal transitions into the chorus sections, there aren't any "jarring" shifts in momentum and intensity levels throughout the song. The closest would be the transition from the first verse into the pre-chorus, the ultra-intense bridge into the mellow interlude that follows and the last chorus into the outro. Other than that, the flow is pretty much gradual and steady in nature.

Play By Play:

Stronger kicks off in a moderate "alternative" fashion, characterized by the pulsating bass synth, solo electric guitars and atmospheric background synth. The momentum and intensity levels are then kicked up as we enter into the **first verse** at **0:08** via the introduction of the kick and hats into the mix coupled with Clarkson's semi-subdued vocals. The overall momentum level remains constant throughout the section.

At **0:25**, we enter into the **first pre-chorus**, where we see things getting more intense via the addition of the snare and electric guitar "stabs" coupled with Clarkson's more intense vocal delivery. (As a side note – notice how the increased intensity of the section is jibing with the more intense nature of the lyrics.) The overall momentum level remains pretty much constant throughout the section until the synth swell enters into the mix at the tail end, bringing the tension to an apex, which is then followed by an abrupt pause and solo *What doesn't kill you makes you...* vocal that transitions us into the chorus that follows.

At **0:43** the **first chorus** slams in on the lyric *stronger*, which was the last lyric from the line that was started in the preceding vocal transition section. It's that solo vocal that gives the chorus all the more impact when it hits, characterized by the full-on dance beat, electric guitars, synths and Clarkson's soaring, intense vocal delivery.

The intensity that defines the first half of the chorus remains constant throughout, until increasing a notch further as we enter into the **second half** of the section at **1:00**, initially brought about by Clarkson's more intense vocal delivery (i.e. *stronger, STRONGER...*) and slightly more up-front synth levels that remain in effect throughout the balance of the section.

At **1:16** we enter into the **second verse** where the overall momentum level is significantly above that which defined the first verse, specifically due to the carry-over dance beat from the chorus (remember that the first verse was defined just by the kick and hats) and Clarkson's more "vibrant" vocal delivery (which was much more subdued during the first verse.) The overall

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momentum level remains constant throughout the section until increasing ever so slightly as we enter into the **second (half) pre-chorus** at **1:33**, brought about by the increased tension in Clarkson's vocal delivery coupled with the addition of the guitar "stabs."

At **1:39** we hit the **solo vocal transition** once again followed by the **chorus** slamming in at **1:41**. The momentum and intensity levels of the section are pretty much on par with that of the first chorus, with the exception being that the background vocals give it a slightly more intense vibe.

At **2:14** we enter into the **bridge** following the brief drum fill that transitions us out of the preceding chorus. It's in this section where the intensity level of the song reaches its zenith, primarily brought about by key change (Am to Dm,) the more up-front pulsating "fuzz" synth and Clarkson's ultra-intense vocal delivery.

Following the ultra-intense nature of the bridge, the listener is finally given a "breather" during the **interlude** that occurs at **2:31**, where the momentum and intensity levels are brought way down specifically due to the drums and pulsating fuzz synth being pulled from the mix. The section just consists of atmospheric synths coupled with Clarkson's more subdued vocal delivery that begins toward the end of the lyric *beginning* (carry over from the bridge) through *in the end*.

The intensity then starts to grow through the tail end of the section, where we see the "airy" synth swell once again entering the mix and other synths morphing toward a higher register before entering into the **vocal transition** once again at **2:37**. Notice that this time around the synth swell remains in the mix with the solo vocal until the snare hits at the tail end before slamming right back into the chorus.

The third and **final chorus** hits at **2:39** and follows the same general momentum and intensity level pattern as the preceding chorus sections within the song. The only real difference is that the length of the third chorus is extended, incorporating an additional *stronger, STRONGER...* section that helps to keep the intensity way up there.

At **3:29** we immediately enter into the **outro** that follows the preceding chorus, where the momentum and intensity levels are brought back down to what was defining the intro of the song. Note that this brief outro is virtually the same as the intro, except that the overall levels are slightly higher. This continues for eight seconds until the guitars and bass are pulled from the mix, which is then followed by the synth ringing out until coming to a **final conclusion** at **3:42**.

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Intro: 8.5/10

Characterized by the clean guitars, pulsating synth bass and atmospheric synth, the intro to *Stronger* is quite "strong" on a number of levels:

- It comes across as being **unique** in the scope of the overall current Pop genre, and as a

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result acts as a **strong identifier** for the song (i.e. it stands out amongst all others.) The nature of the guitars have more in common with the Red Hot Chili Pepper's *Parallel Universe* or Radiohead than anything sounding like Britney, Bruno or Gaga.

- It instantly establishes the **moody nature** that defines the first verse and pre-chorus sections of the song.
- Since the nature of the intro guitars carry right over into the first verse, it provides for a **seamless transition** between sections.

Verses: 9/10

THE MUSIC

First Verse:

As previously mentioned, the guitars that defined the intro carry right over into the first verse and are now supported by the kick and hats that work in tandem to get the propulsion of the song into gear. Additionally, notice that the “atmospheric” synth that was present in the intro also provides the first verse with color, ambiance and texture, while the synth that enters at the tail end of the section provides an engaging transition into the first pre-chorus that follows.

Overall, the music that defines the first verse perfectly supports and accentuates the lyrics and tone present in Clarkson's vocal delivery.

Second Verse:

The music in the second verse continues on with the dance beat that was defining the preceding chorus, coupled with a low/mid level “fuzz” synth that adds texture and increased propulsion to the section, “atmospheric” synths that add color and a low to mid level guitar swell that provides a subtle transition into the second pre-chorus.

Overall, the music that defines the second verse does a great job of accentuating Clarkson's more upbeat vocal delivery and “moving on” lyrical theme.

THE LYRICS & HARMONIC PROGRESSION

This section provides you with the structure of the lyrics and harmonic progression in both verse sections of the song. Reference the Lyric section in the Overall Assessment section of the report for details regarding the overall storyline and meaning.

Key:

Blue Font: Indicates the lyric where the chord change takes place.

Verse 1

Am-F-C-G/B

You know the bed feels warmer, sleeping here alone

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Am-F-C-G/B

You know I dream in color, and do the things I want

Syllable & Word Count: 1st Verse

Line 1: 9 words / 12 syllables

Line 2: 12 words / 13 syllables

IMAGERY, PLACE & TIME BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE FIRST VERSE:

(These lyrics "paint a picture" in your head and establish the time & place within the story)

- *Bed*
- *Dream in color* (in addition to action)

EMOTIONAL BASED LYRICS AND PHRASES IN THE FIRST VERSE:

(These lyrics convey emotion – enabling you to "feel" what the characters are feeling within the story)

- *The bed feels warmer*
- *Sleeping here alone*
- *Do the things I want*

ACTION BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE FIRST VERSE:

(These lyrics get you into what the characters within the story are actually doing)

- *Sleeping here*
- *I Dream in color*

CHARACTER/PERSON BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE FIRST VERSE (INCLUDING PRONOUNS):

(These lyrics show how all of the characters within the story are defined)

- *You*
- *I*

LINE ARRANGEMENT IN THE FIRST VERSE

Notice how each line is broken up into two phrases, making it easier for the listener to grasp onto and remember.

Line 1: *You know the bed feels warmer, sleeping here alone*

Line 2: *You know I dream in color, and do the things I want*

Verse 2

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Am-F-C-G/B

You heard that I was starting over with someone new

Am-F-C-G/B

They told you I was moving on over you

Syllable & Word Count: 2nd Verse

Line 1: 10 words / 12 syllables

Line 2: 9 words / 10 syllables

IMAGERY, PLACE & TIME BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND VERSE:

(These lyrics "paint a picture" in your head and establish the time & place within the story)

- None

EMOTIONAL BASED LYRICS AND PHRASES IN THE SECOND VERSE:

(These lyrics convey emotion – enabling you to "feel" what the characters are feeling within the story)

- *Starting over* (besides action it has an emotional context to it)
- *Moving on over you* (besides action it has an emotional context to it)

ACTION BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND VERSE:

(These lyrics get you into what the characters within the story are actually doing)

- *Starting over*
- *You heard*
- *Moving on*
- *They told you*

CHARACTER/PERSON BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND VERSE (INCLUDING PRONOUNS):

(These lyrics show how all of the characters within the story are defined)

- *You*
- *I*
- *Someone*
- *They*

LINE ARRANGEMENT IN THE SECOND VERSE

Notice in the second verse that there is basically just one continuous phrase on each line, with increased emphasis given to the last two lyrics on each line via how they're phrased.

Line 1: *You heard that I was starting over with someone new*

Line 2: *They told you I was moving on over you*

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THE VOCAL MELODY

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL MELODY PRESENT IN THE VERSE SECTIONS (*listen* to the section while you look at this):

Key:

Red Diamond: Any note value longer in duration than an 8th note (including rests)

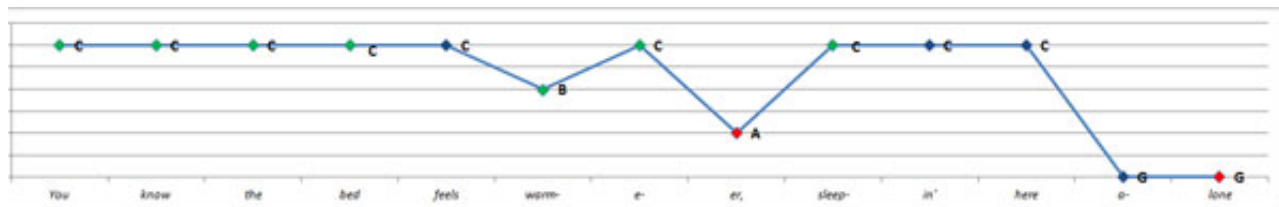
Blue Diamond: Quarter note

Green Diamond: Eighth note

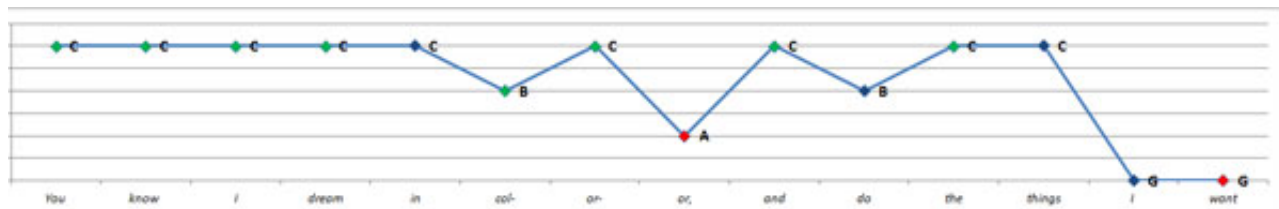
Yellow Diamond: Sixteenth note

Verse 1

Line 1



Line 2



Note that the lyrics in the first verse focus more on a **love/relationship theme** than the pure inspirational/empowerment vibe that defines the pre-chorus and chorus sections of the song.

- The first thing that you'll notice is that the first five lyrics on each line are sung in a monotone delivery in the key of **C**. This does a good job of accentuating the subdued, semi-sultry tone that Clarkson is projecting in her voice.
- Note that the monotone **C** delivery is broken up in two key places on each line. In line 1, the lyric *warm-er* is stretched out over **B-C-A**, and the lyric *alone* drops down to the key of **G**. What this does is first bring each phrase to a conclusion, second to provide those lyrics with more emphasis (since they differ from the straight up **C** delivery) and third it does a great job accentuating the emotion that Clarkson is communicating in the lyrics.

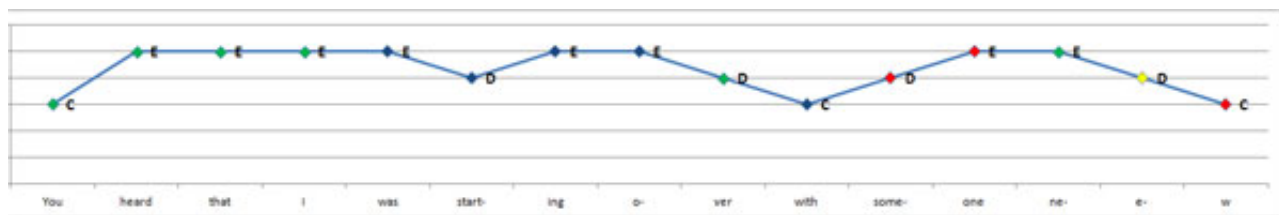
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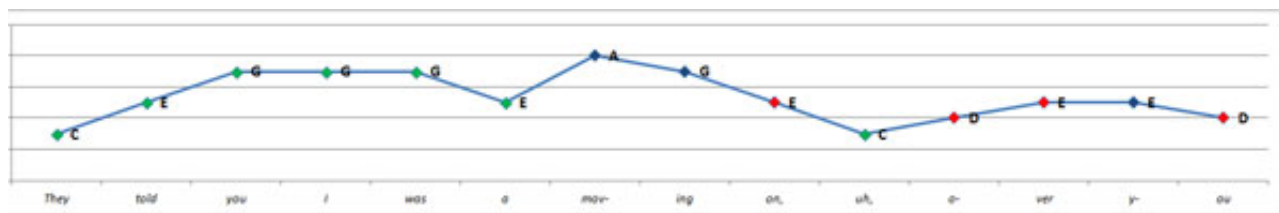
- Notice how her phrasing utilizes both **eighth** and **quarter note** delivery. The first four lyrics on both lines are eighth notes, followed by a quarter note. It's this quarter note (*feels* on the first line and *in* on the second line) that helps to accentuate the impact of the prolonged lyrics that follow (*warm-e-er* on the first line and *col-or-or* on the second line). Additionally, notice how her vocal delivery "slows down" a touch (i.e. switching over to a primarily quarter note delivery) at the end of each line as well. Again, this does a great job of furthering the emotion that Clarkson is projecting in the lyrics.

Verse 2

Line 1



Line 2



In complete contrast to the first verse, the second verse differs on nearly all levels:

Now that the nature of the lyrics encompass the more upbeat emotion that the character is feeling now that the guy in the story has found out that she's over him and moving on, the vocal melody accentuates these lyrics as follows:

- On both lines, Clarkson starts off with the first lyric in the key of **C** (just the same as in the first verse,) but from that point on, her voice goes up in register (even more so on the second line than the first.)
- Even though both lines are basically one continuous phrase, notice how Clarkson **prolongs the last two lyrics** on each line, providing those lyrics with increased emphasis and also doing a good job of breaking up the line a bit so that it's easier for the listener to digest and remember.
- Notice the **melodic flow** on both lines to see how Clarkson's voice goes up and down in register in specific areas to help accentuate the lyrics that follow. Basically, you can

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split the melodic flow in the graphs above into **thirds** as follows:

First third:

- Starts at the beginning of the line and ends on **D** in the first syllable of the lyric *starting* on the first line.
- Starts at the beginning of the line and ends on **E** in the lyric *a* on the second line.

Second third:

- Starts at the end of the first third above and continues through the lyric *with* on the first line (sets up the lyrics *someone new*.)
- Starts at the end of the first third above and continues through the lyric *uh* on the second line (sets up the lyrics *over you*.)

Final third:

- Consists of the lyrics *someone new* on the first line.
- Consists of the lyrics *over you* on the second line.

Pre-Chorus: 9/10

THE MUSIC

First Pre-Chorus:

The music of the first pre-chorus kicks up the momentum and intensity over what was defining the preceding verse section primarily due to the changeover to the more dance oriented beat (kick, snare and hats) plus the addition of the compressed “fuzz” synth that gives the section a bit more propulsion and heaviness (more so during the second half of the section than the first.) Additionally, the guitar “stabs” do a great job of putting sort of an “exclamation point” after certain phrases, further hammering home the lyrics.

Example: *Think you got the best of me* , *Think you've had the last laugh* , etc...

To conclude the section, an “airy” high-pitched synth swell enters the mix at the tail end, followed by a snare/kick hit that brings the music to an abrupt end.

All in all, the music does a great job of supporting and accentuating the nature of Clarkson's vocal delivery, which is more “defiant” in nature than in the preceding verse.

Second Pre-Chorus:

The music that defines the second pre-chorus is very similar in nature to that of the first pre-chorus, with the primary differences being as follows:

- The overall levels are a bit higher than they were during the first pre-chorus.

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- The “fuzz” synth is more prominent in the mix, giving the overall sound a “thicker” feel. Additionally, the synth pattern also adds increased momentum to the section as well.

THE LYRICS & HARMONIC PROGRESSION

Key:

Blue Font: Indicates the lyric where the chord change takes place.

PRE-CHORUS-1

1st Stanza

Am

You think you got the best of me

F

Think you've had the last laugh

C-G/B

*Bet you think that everything **good** is gone*

2nd Stanza

Am

Think you left me broken down

F

Think that I'll come running back

C-G/B

*Baby you don't know me 'cause you're **dead** wrong*

Syllable & Word Count: 1st Stanza

Line 1: 8 words / 8 syllables

Line 2: 6 words / 6 syllables

Line 3: 8 words / 10 syllables

Syllable & Word Count: 2nd Stanza

Line 1: 6 words / 7 syllables

Line 2: 6 words / 7 syllables

Line 3: 9 words / 10 syllables

IMAGERY, PLACE & TIME BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE FIRST PRE-CHORUS:

(These lyrics “paint a picture” in your head and establish the time & place within the story)

- None

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EMOTIONAL BASED LYRICS AND PHRASES IN THE FIRST PRE-CHORUS:

(These lyrics convey emotion – enabling you to “feel” what the characters are feeling within the story)

- Every line in this section is emotional in nature.

ACTION BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE FIRST PRE-CHORUS:

(These lyrics get you into what the characters within the story are actually doing)

- *Running back.*

CHARACTER/PERSON BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE FIRST PRE-CHORUS (INCLUDING PRONOUNS):

(These lyrics show how all of the characters within the story are defined)

- *You*
- *Me*
- *You've*
- *I'll*
- *You're*
- *Baby*

LINE ARRANGEMENT IN THE FIRST PRE-CHORUS

Notice that each line in the first pre-chorus is one continuous phrase. This gives the section increased diversity and impact from the verse that preceded it (remember, each line in the first verse was broken into two phrases).

PRE-CHORUS-2

Am

You didn't think that I'd come back

F

I'd come back swinging

C-G/B

You tried to break me but you see

Syllable & Word Count

Line 1: 7 words / 8 syllables

Line 2: 4 words / 5 syllables

Line 3: 8 words / 8 syllables

IMAGERY, PLACE & TIME BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND PRE-CHORUS:

(These lyrics “paint a picture” in your head and establish the time & place within the story)

- None

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EMOTIONAL BASED LYRICS AND PHRASES IN THE SECOND PRE-CHORUS:

(These lyrics convey emotion – enabling you to “feel” what the characters are feeling within the story)

- Every line in this section is emotional in nature.

ACTION BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND PRE-CHORUS:

(These lyrics get you into what the characters within the story have done or are doing)

- *Come back swinging* (also emotional in nature)
- *Tried to break me* (also emotional in nature)

CHARACTER/PERSON BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND PRE-CHORUS (INCLUDING PRONOUNS):

(These lyrics show how all of the characters within the story are defined)

- *You*
- *I'd*
- *Me*

LINE ARRANGEMENT IN THE SECOND PRE-CHORUS

Notice that just like in the first pre-chorus, the second pre-chorus is just one continuous phrase per line.

THE VOCAL MELODY

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL MELODY PRESENT IN THE PRE-CHORUS SECTIONS (*listen* to the section while you look at this):

Red Diamond: Any note value longer in duration than an 8th note (including rests)

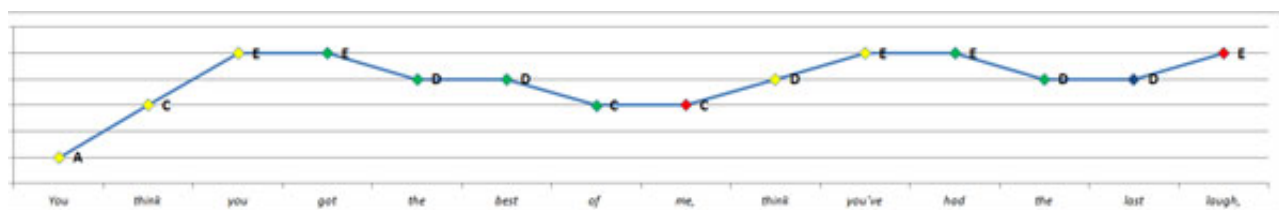
Blue Diamond: Quarter note

Green Diamond: Eighth note

Yellow Diamond: Sixteenth note

Pre-Chorus 1

Line 1

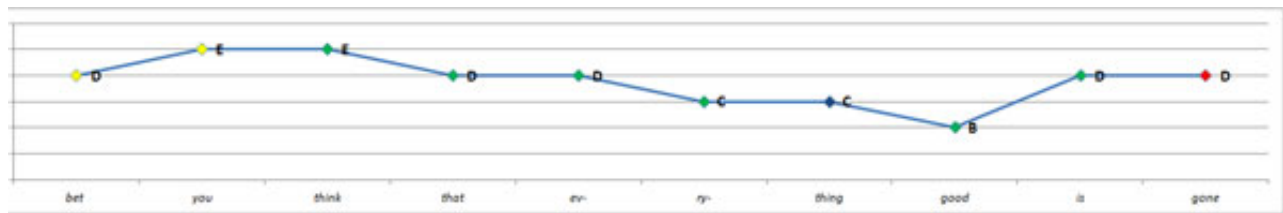


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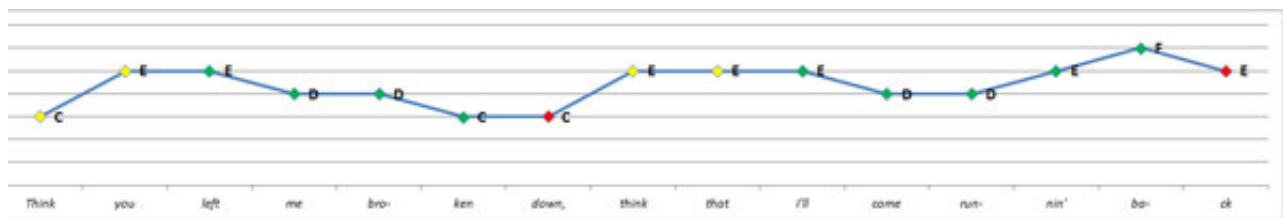
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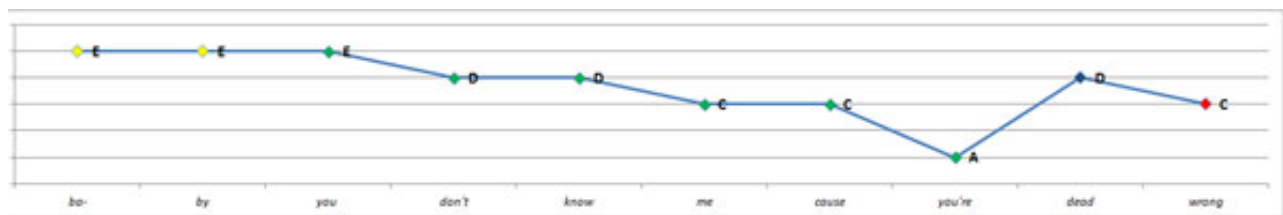
Line 2



Line 3



Line 4



In contrast to the more “subdued” nature of the verse that preceded it, the vocal melody that defines the first pre-chorus accentuates the more “defiant” and “confident” tone that’s present in the lyrics.

- Notice that the **first** and **third lines** are split into **two phrases**. The **second** and **fourth lines** are basically **one continuous phrase** (though the quarter note on the last syllable in the lyric *everything* on the second line does break things up a bit and sets up the *good is gone* lyrics).
- **Lines two, three** and **four** kick off with a rapid-fire **sixteenth note** delivery on the first two syllables of the line. Note that the first line has a sixteenth note delivery on the first three syllables. Additionally, the second phrase on lines one and three also kick off with a sixteenth note delivery as well (*think you've* on the first line and *think that* on the second line). This “rapid fire” delivery provides the lyrics with a bit more of an “urgent” vibe.
- Notice that **lines one** and **three** and **two** and **four** basically follow the same melodic progression with some very minor differences (the overall framework is pretty much the

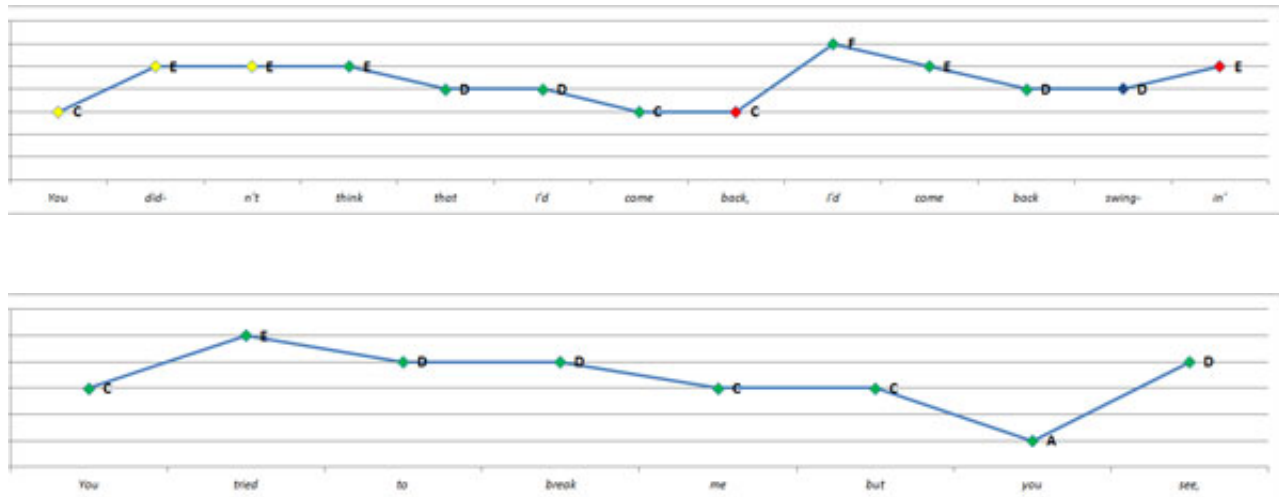
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same, which is paramount in creating consistency with the end goal of fostering memorability with the listener).

- Notice how the lyric *dead* is accentuated on the fourth line by both changing over to a quarter note value (from the eighth notes that preceded it) coupled with the jump from **A** in the preceding lyric (*you're*) to **D**. Those lyrics *dead wrong* are exceptionally important in the overall scope of the story, and this was a great way to emphasize them.

Pre-Chorus 2



The melodic flow present in the second pre-chorus once again accentuates the “defiant” and “confident” nature of the lyrics, basically following the structure that defined the first pre-chorus. The only substantial difference that you’ll notice is that line two doesn’t kick off with a sixteenth note flurry. Instead, the entire line consists of an eighth note delivery.

Chorus: 10/10

THE MUSIC

The music in the chorus is a heavy, powerful, layered “wall of sound” brought about primarily by heavy pulsating “fuzz” synths, distorted electric guitars, high-pitched synths (that are very necessary to counter all of the lower end fuzz,) synth bass and a full-on dance beat. As with all of the other sections within the song, the backing music gives Clarkson the perfect platform to reach to the stars with her vocal ability and really hammer home the impact of the inspirational/empowerment themed lyrics.

THE LYRICS & HARMONIC PROGRESSION

Key:

Blue Font: Indicates the lyric where the chord change takes place.

1st Stanza

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Am

What doesn't kill you makes you stronger

F

Stand a little taller

C-G/B

Doesn't mean I'm lonely when I'm alone

2nd Stanza

Am

What doesn't kill you makes a fighter

F

Footsteps even lighter

C-G/B

Doesn't mean I'm over 'cause you're gone

3rd Stanza

Am-F

What doesn't kill you makes you stronger, stronger

C-G/B

Just me, myself and I

4th Stanza

Am

What doesn't kill you makes you stronger

F

Stand a little taller

C -G/B

Doesn't mean I'm lonely when I'm alone

Syllable & Word Count: 1st Stanza

Line 1: 7 words / 9 syllables

Line 2: 4 words / 6 syllables

Line 3: 7 words / 10 syllables

Syllable & Word Count: 2nd Stanza

Line 1: 7 words / 9 syllables

Line 2: 3 words / 6 syllables

Line 3: 7 words / 9 syllables

Syllable & Word Count: 3rd Stanza

Line 1: 8 words / 11 syllables

Line 2: 5 words / 13 syllables

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Syllable & Word Count: 4th Stanza

Line 1: 7 words / 9 syllables

Line 2: 4 words / 6 syllables

Line 3: 7 words / 10 syllables

IMAGERY, PLACE & TIME BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE CHORUS:

(These lyrics "paint a picture" in your head and establish the time & place within the story)

- None

EMOTIONAL BASED LYRICS AND PHRASES IN THE CHORUS:

(These lyrics convey emotion – enabling you to "feel" what the characters are feeling within the story)

- Every line in the chorus is emotional in nature.

ACTION BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE CHORUS:

(These lyrics get you into what the characters within the story have done or are doing)

- Stand a little taller (emotional as well)
- Footsteps even lighter (emotional as well)

CHARACTER/PERSON BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE CHORUS (INCLUDING PRONOUNS):

(These lyrics show how all of the characters within the story are defined)

- You
- I'm
- You're
- Me
- Myself
- I

LINE ARRANGEMENT IN THE CHORUS

As with the pre-chorus, each line in the chorus consists of a single phrase.

THE VOCAL MELODY

GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL MELODY PRESENT IN THE CHORUS
(listen to the section while you look at this):

Red Diamond: Any note value longer in duration than an 8th note (including rests)

Blue Diamond: Quarter note

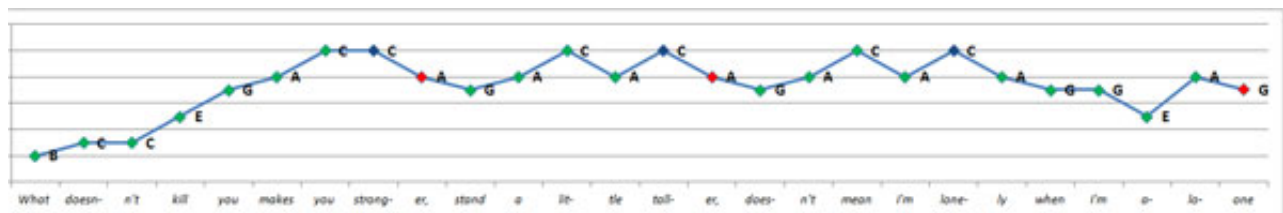
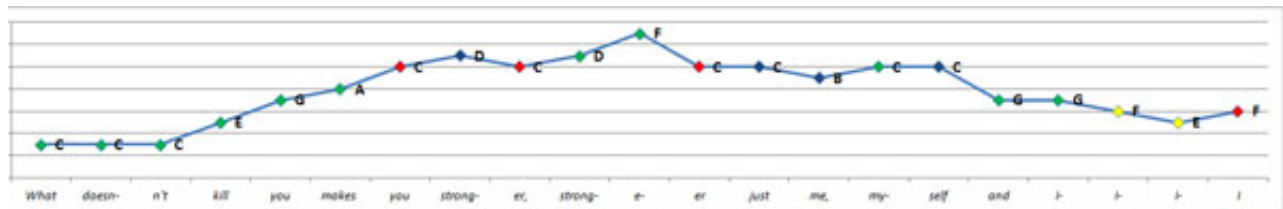
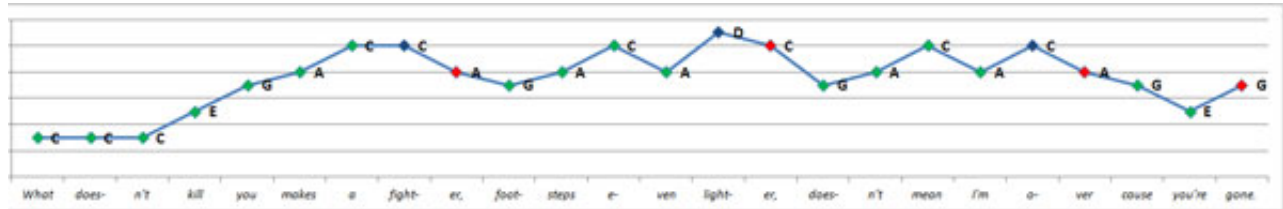
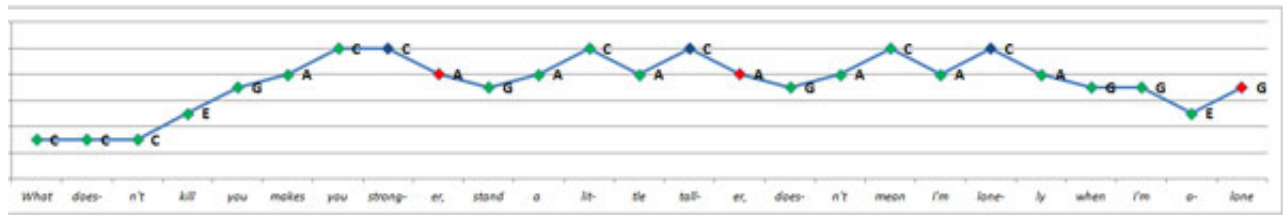
Green Diamond: Eighth note

Yellow Diamond: Sixteenth note

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Here in the chorus the lyrics change over from what was more of a love/relationship lyrical theme earlier in the song to a mostly **inspirational/empowerment** theme. The soaring, powerful nature of Clarkson's vocal melody does a fantastic job of hammering it home.

- The first thing that you'll notice is that each of the four lines kicks off with the **ascending eighth note delivery** of the *What doesn't kill you makes you* solo vocal (except on the second line where the lyric *a* is used instead of *you*.) This ascending melody does a fantastic job of leading the listener right into the song-defining lyric that follows (*stronger* on lines 1, 3 and 4, and *fighter* on line 2.)
- Notice how **key lyrics** in the section are stretched out with a **quarter note delivery** to provide them with more emphasis (in relation to the eighth note delivery that preceded them.) These lyrics are all "empowering" in nature: *strong-er*, *tall-er*, *fight-er*, and *light-er*.
- All but one line are split up into **three individual phrases**. The exception is line three, but the rests that follow the first and second *stronger* do basically split the line up into

three distinctive segments.

- Notice on lines **one**, **two** and **four** that the **first two phrases** on the line basically follow the same melodic progression, with the **last phrase** basically “wrapping it up” by descending to set up the ascending line that follows.
- Notice that the **melodic progression** present in lines **one**, **two** and **four** are virtually identical in nature, with just some minor differences. This is an exceptionally effective way of ingraining the melody inside the listeners head, and as a result **fostering memorability**.
- So as to not make the entire chorus section too repetitive where it might cause the listener to start losing interest, the **melodic progression** that defines **line 3** provides some much needed diversity to the section.
- Notice that even though **lines one** and **two** are very similar in nature that Clarkson takes the emotion to the next level on line two by just changing around one specific note. On line one, the lyric *taller* was stretched from **C** to **A**. On line two, the lyric *lighter* now goes up to **D** and concludes on **C**. By going up in register, Clarkson provides diversity to the section, increased emotion and also really emphasizes the lyric *lighter* by lifting the lyric above all others on the line (plus it makes sense that *lighter* should go up even further due to its meaning.)
- Notice how on **line three** the lyric *stronger* is **doubly emphasized**, with the second occurrence hitting the highest note in the mix (**F**.)
- Notice the pause that comes after the lyric *you* on the **third line**, and how this brief delay gives the lyric *stronger* that follows increased impact when it hits.

Bridge: 9/10

THE MUSIC

The first thing that you'll notice about the bridge is that the music is in a different key than the rest of the song. Up until this point, every section of the song has kicked off in **Am**. The bridge ups it to **Dm**. What this does (in conjunction specifically with the upfront pulsating fuzz synths) is take the overall intensity of the song to the next level. Now, put Clarkson's ultra-intense vocals on top of it and you take the song to its ultimate sonic peak.

The interlude that follows (characterized by the atmospheric synths and synth bass) does a fantastic job of taking things WAY down, giving the listener a chance to catch their breath before slamming right back into the final chorus that follows.

THE LYRICS & HARMONIC PROGRESSION

Key:

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Blue Font: Indicates the lyric where the chord change takes place.

Dm

Thanks to you I got a new thing started

B-flat

Thanks to you I'm not the broken hearted

Am

Thanks to you I'm finally thinkin' 'bout me

F-Am

You know in the end, the day you left was just my beginning

**In the end...(Interlude Section)*

Syllable & Word Count

Line 1: 9 words / 10 syllables

Line 2: 8 words / 10 syllables

Line 3: 8 words / 10 syllables

Line 4: 14 words / 16 syllables

Line 5: 3 words / 3 syllables

IMAGERY, PLACE & TIME BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE BRIDGE:

(These lyrics "paint a picture" in your head and establish the time & place within the story)

- None

EMOTIONAL BASED LYRICS AND PHRASES IN THE SECOND BRIDGE:

(These lyrics convey emotion – enabling you to "feel" what the characters are feeling within the story)

- Every line in this section is emotional in nature.

ACTION BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE SECOND BRIDGE:

(These lyrics get you into what the characters within the story have done or are doing)

- *Thinkin' 'bout me* (emotional as well)

CHARACTER/PERSON BASED LYRICS & PHRASES IN THE BRIDGE (INCLUDING PRONOUNS):

(These lyrics show how all of the characters within the story are defined)

- *You*
- *I*

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- *I'm*
- *Me*
- *My*

LINE ARRANGEMENT IN THE BRIDGE

The first three lines are all one singular phrase, while the fourth (last) line is broken into two segments:

You know in the end, the day you left was just my beginning.

THE VOCAL MELODY

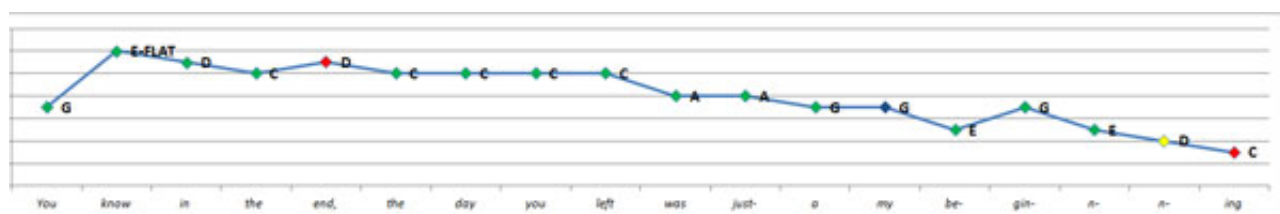
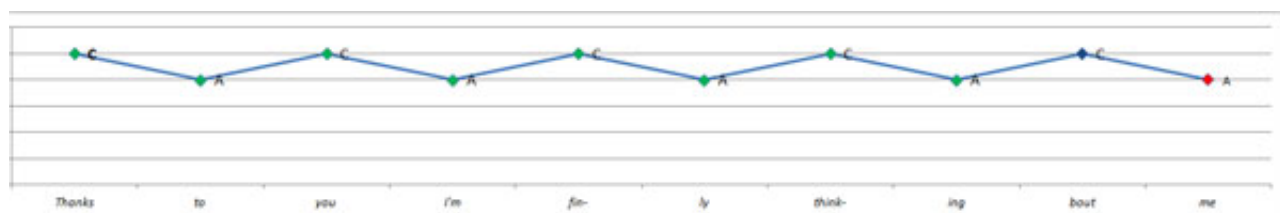
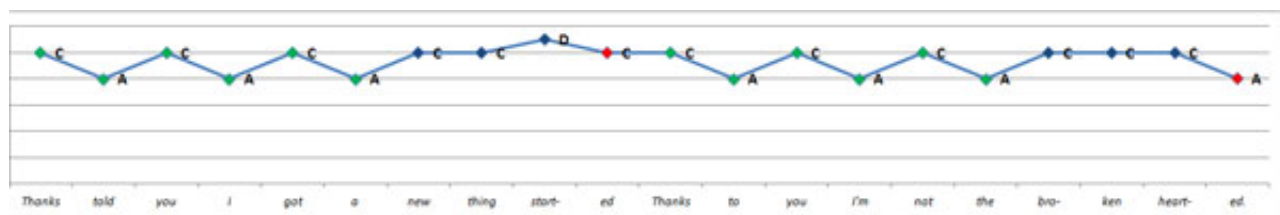
GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE VOCAL MELODY PRESENT IN THE BRIDGE
(listen to the section while you look at this):

Red Diamond: Any note value longer in duration than an 8th note (including rests)

Blue Diamond: Quarter note

Green Diamond: Eighth note

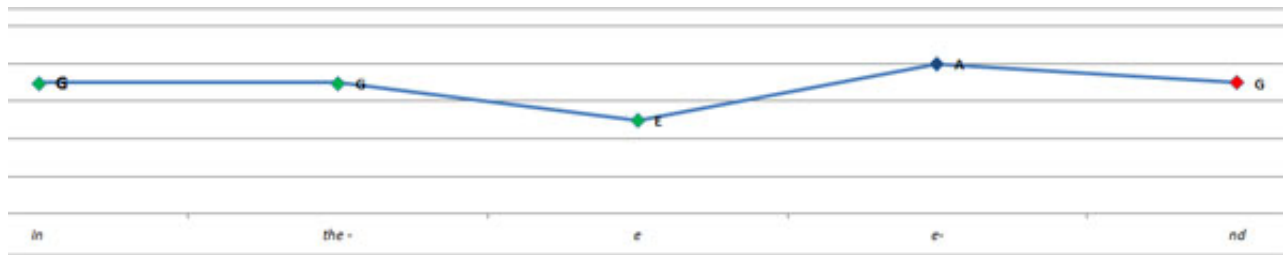
Yellow Diamond: Sixteenth note



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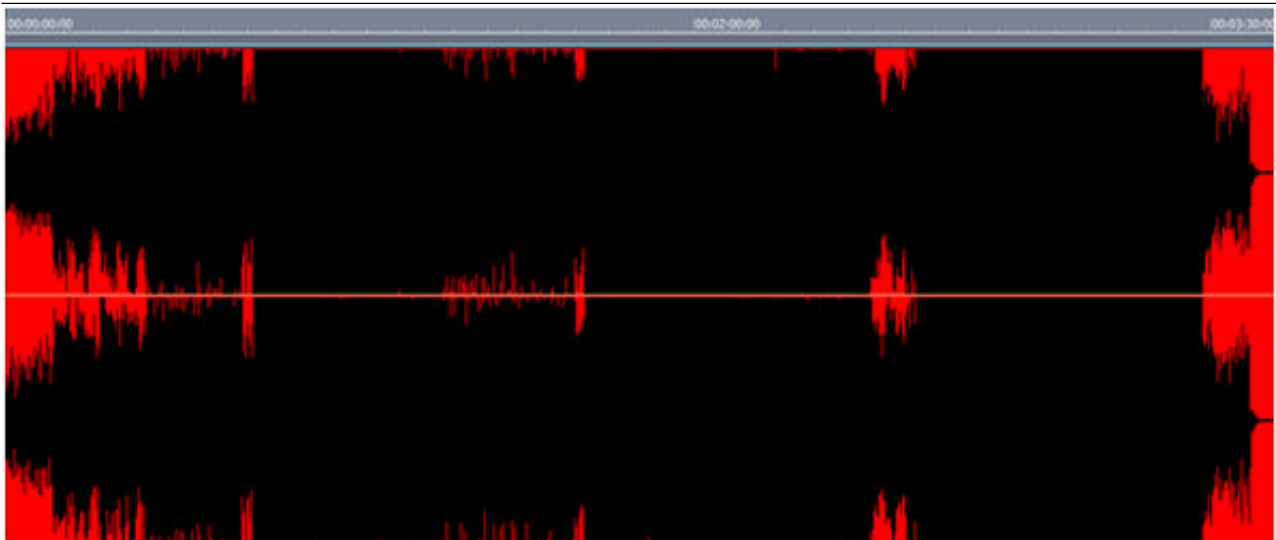
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In the bridge, the nature of the lyrics change over to empowerment brought about by the nature of the relationship between the characters, where she's basically thanking this guy for the hardships because it enabled her to start her life over and finally focus on herself.

- On the first two *thanks to you* lines (represented in the first graph above,) Clarkson is basically just fluctuating between a **C-A** delivery with the exception being the *new thing started* and *broken hearted* phrases which ride **C** with the exceptions being the syllable "start" in *started* which goes up to **D** (giving the lyric greater emphasis) and the syllable "ed" in *hearted* which goes down to **A**.
- The third *thanks to you* line rides **A-C** all the way through.
- The last line in the bridge starts out by jumping from **G** to **E-flat** (really emphasizing the lyric *know*,) before starting on a slow decent all the way down to **C** that will lead into the *in the end* phrase that occurs in the interlude section that follows.

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As you can clearly see in the graphic above, Stronger is immensely compressed for maximum sonic impact, most notably in the chorus sections. The only real "breathing room" is evident in the intro, first verse, outro, transition and interlude sections of the song. Otherwise – it's LOUD!

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INTRO/OUTRO	Tone/Comments	Pan
Electric Guitar-1	Clean and crisp – up front in the mix.	10:00
Electric Guitar-2	Clean and crisp – up front in the mix	1:00
Bass	Synth bass – pulsating, low and compressed – mid level in the mix	12:00
Synth	Atmospheric, morphing background effect going from high to low pitch. The level throughout the section is bell shaped – peaks mid way through, but overall is pretty low in the mix.	10:00-12:00

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VERSE	Tone/Comments	Pan
Lead Vocal	Kelly Clarkson – up front in the mix. Slight reverb and delay – pretty dry overall.	11:00-12:00
Background Vocal	Kelly Clarkson – the “sleeping here alone” repeat off of the lead vocal. Bounces l/r in the mix – mid level and processed in nature (lowfi when panned right)	9:00-3:00
Drums	Electronic – kick and hat working in tandem. Mid/up in the mix (behind the lead vocal). The kick is very compressed and multi-tracked.	12:00
Electric Guitar-1	Clean and crisp – mid level in the mix.	10:00
Electric Guitar-2	Clean and crisp – mid level in the mix	1:00
Electric Guitar-3	A quick “accentuation” that is mid/up in the mix and lasts from 0:16 to 0:18. Same sonic quality as the other electric guitars except higher in register.	3:00
Bass	Synth bass – low and compressed – mid level in the mix	12:00
Synth-1	Atmospheric, morphing synth that enters during the second half of the section (becomes more prominent in the mix around the lyrics “dream in color”)	9:00-3:00
Synth-2	Synth effect that transitions from low to high in the mix at the tail end of the section. Starts off panned off the middle but meets at 12:00 right before the pre-chorus.	10:00-2:00
<i>Drums (Verse 2)</i>	<i>The second verse now incorporates an up-front snare in the mix as well as more prominent hats.</i>	<i>12:00</i>
<i>Vocals (Verse 2)</i>	<i>Lead vocals are multi-tracked throughout (harmony). Background vocals toward the end of each line are heavily processed – mid level in the mix and pan from 9:00-3:00</i>	<i>9:00 – 3:00</i>
<i>Synth (Verse 2)</i>	<i>Very compressed “fuzz” synth – low to mid level in the mix.</i>	<i>12:00</i>

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Pre-Chorus	Tone/Comments	Pan
Lead Vocal	Kelly Clarkson – up front in the mix. Slight reverb and delay – pretty dry overall.	11:00-12:00
Drums	Electronic – snare, kick and hats. Mid/up in the mix (behind the lead vocal). Note that the hats are more up front in the mix than the verse. The snare is way up in front.	12:00
Electric Guitar-1	Clean and crisp – mid level in the mix.	10:00
Electric Guitar-2	Clean and crisp – mid level in the mix	1:00
Electric Guitar-3	Trebley overdriven “stabs.” Mid level in the mix.	11:00
Electric Guitar-4	Heavy distortion stabs – “huge” multi-tracked sound - straight down the middle. Occurs at the onset of the second half of the section.	12:00
Bass	Synth bass – low and compressed – mid level in the mix	12:00
Synth-1	Atmospheric, morphing synth that enters during the second half of the section (becomes more prominent in the mix around the lyrics “dream in color”)	9:00-3:00
Synth-2	“Airy” swell toward the tail end of the section – peaks right before the chorus. Primary around 12:00 but is panned throughout the mix.	9:00-3:00
Vocals (Pre-Chorus 2)	Multi-tracked harmony vocals that follow the lead. Pan throughout the mix, but mostly at 9:00/3:00	9:00-3:00
Drums (Pre-Chorus 2)	Further up in the mix than during pre-chorus 1.	12:00

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Chorus	Tone/Comments	Pan
Lead Vocal	Kelly Clarkson – up front in the mix. Slight reverb and delay – multi-tracked background and harmony	12:00
Drums	Electronic – snare, kick and hats. Snare & Kick are up front in the mix (right behind the lead vocal) and the hats are mid-level.	12:00
Electric Guitar-1	Clean and crisp – low to mid level in the mix.	10:00
Electric Guitar-2	Clean and crisp – low to mid level in the mix	1:00
Electric Guitar-3	Multi-tracked with distortion – playing the chord changes. Primary placement at 10:00 in the mix.	10:00-2:00
Bass	Synth bass – low and compressed – mid level in the mix	12:00
Synth-1	Atmospheric, morphing synth that enters during the second half of the section (becomes more prominent in the mix around the lyrics "dream in color")	9:00-3:00
Synth-2	Heavy, pulsating "fuzz" synth that's mid / up in the mix – occurs throughout the mix but primarily 9:00/3:00	9:00-3:00
Synth-3	"Pulsating" "fuzzy" higher-register synth – low/mid level in the mix.	2:00
Synth-4	High-pitched synth – mid level in the mix	2:00
Synth-5	High-pitched swell that transitions into the second half of the section. Low to mid/high in the mix.	10:00-12:00

Bridge	Tone/Comments	Pan
Lead Vocal	Kelly Clarkson – up front in the mix. Slight reverb and delay.	12:00
Drums	Electronic – snare, kick and hats. More up front in the mix than the chorus (specifically the kick and snare).	12:00
Synth-1	Heavy, pulsating "fuzz" synth – up front in the mix. Panned throughout but primarily at 9:00/3:00	9:00-3:00
Synth-2	Higher register prolonged notes that follow in tandem with the chord changes.	2:00
Electric Guitar	Multi-tracked with distortion – playing the chord changes. Primary placement at 10:00 in the mix.	10:00-2:00

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INTERLUDE	Tone/Comments	Pan
Lead Vocal	Kelly Clarkson – up front in the mix. Slight reverb and delay	11:00-12:00
Synths	A combination of the atmospheric morphing synths that have been prevalent throughout the song and synth bass. A synth swell enters the mix at the tail end leading into the chorus.	10:00-12:00

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Compares *Stronger* to all songs that have entered the Billboard Pop top 10 during Q4-2011.

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CATEGORY	Stronger (What Doesn't Kill You)	Y-T-D: All Top 10 Pop Songs	Comparison
Form	A-B-A-B-C-B	A-B-A-B-C-B (Majority)	In-Line
Song Length	3:42	3:59 (Average)	-0:17
Intro Length	0:08	0:14 (Average)	-0:06
Outro Length	0:13	0:19 (Average)	-0:06
Songs That Contain an Intro	Yes	81% of songs	In-Line
Songs That Contain an Outro	Yes	29% of songs	Not In-Line
Time Where 1 st Chorus Hits	0:43 into the song	0:41 (Average)	+0:02
% Into Song Where 1 st Chorus Hits	19% into the song	17% (Average)	+2%
Tempo	Mid/Up	Mid/Up (Majority)	In-Line
Acoustic vs. Electric	Electric	Electric (Majority)	In-Line
Primary Instrumentation	Electric Guitar and Synth	Combo (Majority)	In-Line
Primary Vocal Gender	Female	Male (48%) Female (43%) Duet (9%)	Almost In-Line
Pre-Chorus	Yes	43% of songs	Not In-Line
Solo	No	14% of songs	In-Line
Bridge	Yes	71% of songs	In-Line
Lyrical Theme	Love/Relationship & Inspirational	Love/Relationships	Partially In-Line
Sub-Genre Influence	Electro Pop/Dance & Rock	Electro Pop/Dance	Partially In-Line

The key elements present in *Stronger* are in-line with all Q4-2011 top 10 Pop hits EXCEPT:

- The **song length** is **0:17 shorter** than the average top 10 Pop hit.
- The **intro length** is **0:06 shorter** than the average top 10 Pop hit.
- The **outro length** is **0:06 shorter** than the average top 10 Pop hit.

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- The song contains an **outro** where the vast majority of top 10 hit Pop songs don't.
- The song is **sung by a female** where a small majority of top 10 Pop hits are sung by men.
- *Stronger* features a combination of **Love/Relationship** and **Inspirational/Empowerment** lyrical themes as opposed to a purely Love/Relationship theme.
- The song possesses both an **Electro Pop/Dance & Rock sub-genre influence** as opposed to being purely Electro Pop/Dance in nature.

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Structure: 9.5/10

Does the song flow in a cohesive manner & keep the listener engaged? Overall, *Stronger* is an exceptionally well structured song. Not only does each section naturally progress in and out of one another, but the build and release that each section provides makes for a very engaging listening experience. Your attention is always kept within the song.

Flow Recap:

- The **intro** is short in nature, instantly engaging the listener and establishes the initial vibe of the song.
- The **first verse** transitions seamlessly out of the intro and takes the momentum to the next level.
- The **first pre-chorus** further ups the intensity that was present in the verse, leading to the solo vocal transition that explodes into the chorus.
- The **first chorus** slams in, taking the driving sonic intensity of the song to its peak (that is, until we get to the bridge)
- The **second verse** keeps the momentum of the dance beat going out of the intense chorus, but takes the overall intensity down to give the listener a breather and get back into the storyline.
- The **second pre-chorus** keeps the overall nature of the preceding verse intact, increasing the intensity a bit with the addition of the guitar "stabs" and changed up nature of Clarkson's vocal delivery
- The **second chorus** slams in with the same intensity as the first chorus after another solo "what doesn't kill you" vocal.
- The **bridge** enters right out of the chorus, taking the sonic intensity of the song to a

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grand peak.

- The **interlude** that follows the bridge provides the listener with a much needed “breather” after being bombarded with the chorus followed by the bridge.
- The **third chorus** once again slams the listener right back in and maintains the momentum for an extended period of time over the previous two choruses.
- The **outro** reverts back to the intro theme, bringing the intensity back down as to “ease” the listener out of the song.

*Additionally, it pays to take a look at how each section transitions in and out of each other throughout the song:

- **Intro to Verse 1:** Seamless transition via the instrumentation from the intro.
- **Verse 1 to Pre-Chorus 1:** Synth swell + crash cymbal at the end.
- **Pre-Chorus 1 to Chorus 1:** Solo “what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger” vocal.
- **Chorus 1 to Verse 2:** Brief drum fill in conjunction with the backing music.
- **Verse 2 to Pre-Chorus 2:** Subtle distorted guitar swell in conjunction with the music.
- **Pre-Chorus 2 to Chorus 2:** Solo “what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger” vocal.
- **Chorus 2 to Bridge:** Drum fill + music and laser synth effect
- **Bridge to Interlude:** Synth swell + music then changes on a dime.
- **Interlude to Chorus 3:** Solo vocal + synth swell.
- **Chorus 3 to Outro:** Brief vocal over the music then changes on a dime.

Production: 9/10

How does the production stand up in maximizing the songs impact? The production values of *Stronger* are exceptional in the sense that not only were Alt/Rock and Dance Pop sub-genres successfully fused under one roof, but the raw emotion that was captured in Clarkson’s vocal gave the song an increased “human” feel that enabled her audience to connect on a much deeper level.

Instrumentation/Tone: 9/10

Does the instrumentation and associated tones maximize the vibe of the song? Overall, the instrumentation used and their associated tones did a phenomenal job of bringing this Alt/Rock, Dance/Pop song to life:

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Guitars: The guitars do a great job of providing the song with its alt/rock vibe (specifically the clean guitars in the verse sections) as well as providing it with super charged power in the chorus where the distortion based guitars work in tandem with the synths in creating a wall of sound. Additionally, the nature of the distortion guitar “stabs” that occur during the pre-chorus sections do a great job of providing the section with more “bite” and aggression.

Bass: The pulsating synth bass works in perfect unison with the clean electric guitars in providing the song with that “hypnotic” vibe that is most identifiable during the intro.

Synths: *Stronger* utilizes a plethora of synths throughout, all of which play an integral role in shaping the characteristics and overall vibe of the song. Two specific synths that play very large roles in the scope of the song are the “atmospheric” synths that provide texture and coloring, and the heavy pulsating “fuzz” synth that defines the chorus and bridge sections of the song.

Drums: The upfront electronic drums are the key ingredient that brings the dance nature of this song to life.

Lyrics: 8.5/10

Are the lyrics strong, fresh & original? Do they serve the song and jibe with the vibe of the music? *Stronger's* emotionally charged lyrics aren't cryptic and super-deep where you need to spend a significant amount of time trying to decipher what the premise is all about. On the contrary, they lyrics are conversational, simplistic and straight forward, and it's a good thing that they are. This is a Dance influenced Pop/Rock song that is meant to immediately connect and inspire. Read the “generic” interpretation of the storyline below and compare it with the original lyrics analyzed earlier in the report to see what methods were utilized in bringing the lyrics to life in an engaging manner.

Verse 1: (Love/Relationship & Inspirational/Empowerment themes)

The primary character in the story, (we'll call her Kelly moving forward just to make it easy,) lets us know right off the bat that she got out of a relationship, and she's glad that it's over.

Pre-Chorus 1: (Love/Relationship theme, except for the last line which is Inspirational/Empowerment in nature)

Here in the first four lines of the section Kelly basically tells us that the guy in the story thinks that he “put one over” on her and came out on top (i.e. “got the best of her,” “the last laugh,” etc...) It's the last two lines, however, that really hammer the section home. After detailing what he thinks on the first four lines, she follows that up with “think I'll come running back” – meaning that he probably thinks that he can keep on treating her like crap but she'll always come back for more. The last line of the section, “baby you don't know me 'cause you're dead wrong,” counters all of that and gets us right into the empowerment/inspirational vibe that will define the entire chorus that follows. It's the perfect lead-in line.

Chorus: (Inspirational/Empowerment)

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Here the entire section is all about overcoming adversity and persevering as your own person, without having to rely on anyone else. It's all about learning from your mistakes and how they make you "stronger" going forward.

Verse 2: (Love/Relationship and Inspirational/Empowerment)

Here the story progresses to where the guy has been informed that she found someone new and that she's moving on without him.

Pre-Chorus 2: (Love/Relationships and Inspirational/Empowerment)

Here once again it's all about him underestimating her, that if she came back she'd come back fighting (i.e. "swinging.") All in all, the last line sums it all up and perfectly sets up the empowerment nature of the chorus that follows – "You tried to break me but you see..."

Bridge: (Love/Relationships and Inspirational/Empowerment)

Here Kelly is able to look back on this negative relationship and literally thank the guy for all the turmoil that he caused her. It's because of this adverse relationship that she was able to reconnect with herself and give herself a much needed fresh start by him leaving her.

Vocal Delivery: 10/10

Does the tonality and phrasing of the vocals maximize the songs impact? One of the "strongest" aspects of *Stronger* is Clarkson's vocal performance. She really puts her soul into it throughout, and for the most part it's natural, with very little Auto-Tune being utilized. The result – you get a vocal performance that has a distinct "human" quality to it, resulting in a engaging, emotionally charged delivery that connects with the listener on a deep level. Additionally, Clarkson's background vocals that occur throughout the song do a great job of further enhancing the emotional impact as well.

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Memorability: 9.5/10

How easy is it to remember this song after you hear it once? Overall, *Stronger* is an exceptionally memorable song. First and foremost, it's due to the super-infectious nature of the chorus. The lyrics, melody, vocal delivery and instrumentation work hand in hand in creating a section that's almost impossible to get out of your head once you hear it. Additionally, the "alt/rock" guitars that kick the song off and reappear throughout provide it with a unique identity in the scope of the current Pop genre.

Originality: 9/10

Does this song have its own unique vibe when compared to other songs/artists in the genre? In the scope of the current mainstream Pop genre, The Pop/Rock/Dance nature of *Stronger* does stand out as being unique and original when compared to other artists dominating the charts such as Lady Gaga, Bruno Mars and Rihanna just to name a few. Additionally, Clarkson has a gift for taking a song that could be considered "generic" in nature (not in a negative way – just that it could be sung by a wide range of artists,) and make it all her own once her vocals take hold of it.

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Payoff: 10/10

Does the song provide the listener with a strong payoff (i.e. a hot chorus)? *Stronger* provides the listener with two “strong” payoffs. The first, obviously, is the chorus. The listener is taken on a sonic and lyrical journey that kicks right off at the intro. After building through the verse and pre-chorus sections, the “what doesn’t kill you makes you...” solo vocal prepares the listener to be slammed with that super-infectious wall of sound chorus. In addition to the memorable melody, the inspirational/empowerment nature of the lyrics coupled with Clarkson’s soaring vocal delivery takes the section to grand heights, providing the listener with both a lyrical and sonic payoff. Additionally, the listener is also provided with a second payoff in the bridge, where the sonic levels are brought to a peak coupled with the nature of the lyrical content.

Longevity: 10/10 (Artist), 8/10 (Overall genre Genre)

Does this song have what it takes to stand the test of time? Will it become a staple of the artist's repertoire? In regard to Kelly Clarkson’s body of work, *Stronger* definitely stands out as a highlight and will no doubt be featured in her live shows for the duration of her career. In regard to the Pop genre as a whole, *Stronger* possesses all of the elements to stand the test of time – lyrics with a positive message, infectious melody and a very engaging vocal performance. It might not be held in the same regard as some of the “super hits” off all time, but it definitely has made its mark.

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Song Strengths:

- An outstanding, engaging **vocal performance** from Clarkson that exemplifies raw human emotion.
- *Stronger* is exceptionally **memorable** in nature, most specifically due to the chorus.
- **Superior crafting** that engages the listener from the get-go and culminates with an exceptionally **strong payoff** in the chorus.
- Storyline possesses an **engaging flow** – with each section building off of one another.
- **Strong production values** that perfectly blended Rock, Pop and Dance while always keeping Clarkson’s natural vocals front and center.
- A combination of Love/Relationship and Inspirational/Empowerment themed **lyrics** conveyed in a simplistic yet emotionally charged manner making it easy for the listener to connect.
- An **intro** that serves both as a great “**identifier**” for the song and instantly **sets the tone** for the verse that follows.

Song Weaknesses:

- None at all.

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Besides promotion, live performances, etc., there's one primary reason why *Stronger* is a hit:

- **The Music:** As mentioned throughout this report, *Stronger* is an exceptionally well crafted song where all the elements perfectly came together to create an infectious, engaging song that was put over the top by a phenomenal vocal performance by Clarkson. The song stands out as unique in the current mainstream Pop genre, and has clearly resonated with fans. As of this writing, *Stronger* has hit #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 and Hot Dance Club songs charts, as well as landing in the top 10 in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland, UK and the U.S.

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TAKE AWAYS FROM “STRONGER”:

Below are some of the key attributes that helped to propel *Stronger* to the top of the charts. Incorporating these proven techniques in your own songwriting and producing will undeniably help take your craft to the next level:

- If you've got the chops, utilizing your **natural voice** as much as possible (i.e. not over Auto-Tuning) will provide your song with increased emotion that will enable it to connect and resonate much more with your audience. Kelly Clarkson showed that not just evocative “Adele music” can benefit from this, but it can also make a substantial impact on Pop/Rock/Dance as well.
- If your song possesses a huge, infectious chorus that's full of sonic intensity, consider **pulling the backing music** right before it hits and employing either a transitional pause or a solo vocal to provide it with much more impact when it hits. This was a key technique utilized to make *Stronger's* chorus appear even “stronger.”
- Your **Intro** should serve as a unique “**identifier**” for the song and instantly **set the tone** for the section that follows. *Stronger's* “Alt/Rock” styled intro sticks out in the current Pop genre plus set the tone that defined the first verse that followed.
- Employing **more than one lyrical theme** in your song is a great way to provide the storyline with increased depth and further engage your audience. *Stronger* has a lyrical central point comprised of a self esteem/empowerment theme (in the chorus) that is built around a love/relationship story.
- Remember that the nature of the music and vocal delivery should always jibe with the nature of the lyrics (**prosody**). This is something that *Stronger* pulled off in grand fashion.

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First Verse:

As previously mentioned, the guitars that defined the intro carry right over into the first verse and are now supported by the kick and hats working in tandem to get the propulsion of the song into gear. Additionally, notice that the "atmospheric" synth that was present in the intro also provides the first verse with color, ambience and texture, while the synth that enters at the tail end of the section provides an engaging transition into the first pre-chorus that follows.

Overall, the music that defines the first verse perfectly supports and accentuates the lyrics and tone present in Clarkson's vocal delivery.

Second Verse:

The music in the second verse continues on with the dance beat that was defining the preceding chorus, coupled with a low/mid level "fuzz" synth that adds texture and increased propulsion to the section, "atmospheric" synths that add color and a low to mid level guitar swell that provides a subtle transition into the second pre-chorus.

Overall, the music that defines the second verse does a great job of working in tandem with Clarkson's more upbeat vocal delivery and "moving on" lyrical theme.