

In the Midnight Hour (1965)

Wilson Pickett

LISTEN FOR

- Uncluttered, classic Stax arrangement
- Spontaneous vocal styling
- Blues feeling
- Textural development in horns
- Delayed backbeat groove

CREATION

Songwriters Wilson Pickett, Steve Cropper

Label, Record Atlantic 2289

Musicians Wilson Pickett (voice), Donald “Duck” Dunn (bass), Steve Cropper (guitar), Al Jackson, Jr. (drums), Wayne Jackson (trumpet), Andrew Love and Charles “Packy” Axton (tenor saxophone), Floyd Newman (baritone saxophone)

Producer Jerry Wexler

Engineer Jim Stewart

Recording Stax studio (Memphis); May 1965; mono

Charts Pop 21, R&B 1

MUSIC

Genre Southern soul

Form Simple verse

Key E major

Meter 4/4, with Stax’s signature delayed backbeat

LISTENING GUIDE

Time	Form	Lyric Cue	Listen For
0:00 0:09	Intro (4+2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measured drum roll; bluesy horn fanfare. • 2-bar vamp • Snare/guitar backbeat accents are slightly delayed • Bass plays arpeggios reinforced with a pickup riff on the baritone saxophone.
0:13 0:31 0:39	Verse 1 (8+7)	"I'm gonna wait" "I'm gonna take you"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocal accompanied by vamp. • Sustained horn chords. • Vamp with horn riff.
0:46	Turnaround (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flat VII chord (D).
0:50 1:07 1:16	Verse 2 (8+7)	"I'm gonna wait" "You're the only"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocal accompanied by vamp with added horn riffs. • Sustained horn chords. • Vamp with horn riff.
1:23	Turnaround (2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As before.
1:27	Instr. Break (8)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horns in unison • Groove feel shifts slightly as snare plays on every quarter note.
1:43	Verse 3 (19 + fade)	"I'm gonna wait"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vamp plays throughout; horn riffs twice as frequent as Verse 2.

LYRICS

I'm gonna wait 'til the midnight hour
That's when my love comes tumbling down
I'm gonna wait 'til the midnight hour
When there's no one else around

I'm gonna take you girl and hold you
And do all things I told you in the midnight
hour
Yes I am, yes I am
One more thing I just wanna say right here

I'm gonna wait 'till the stars come out
And see them twinkle in your eyes
I'm gonna wait 'till the midnight hour
That's when my love begins to shine

You're the only girl I know
That can really love me so in the midnight
hour
Oh yeah, in the midnight hour
Yeah, alright, play it for me one time now

I'm gonna wait 'til the midnight hour
That's when my love comes tumbling down
I'm gonna wait, wait 'til the midnight hour
That's when my love begins to shine, just, you
and I
Oh baby just, you and I
Nobody around baby, just, you and I, alright
You know what, I'm gonna hold you in my
arms
Just, you and I, oh yeah in the midnight hour
Oh baby in the midnight hour

SOURCES

- John Covach and Andrew Flory, *What's That Sound*, 4th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 2015), 235–37.
- Albin Zak III, Course Pak for A MUS-398 at the University of Albany.
- <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/wilsonpickett/inthemidnighthour222517.html>.