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Holly Humberstone On Her New EP And How Nottingham Has Shaped Her As An Artist



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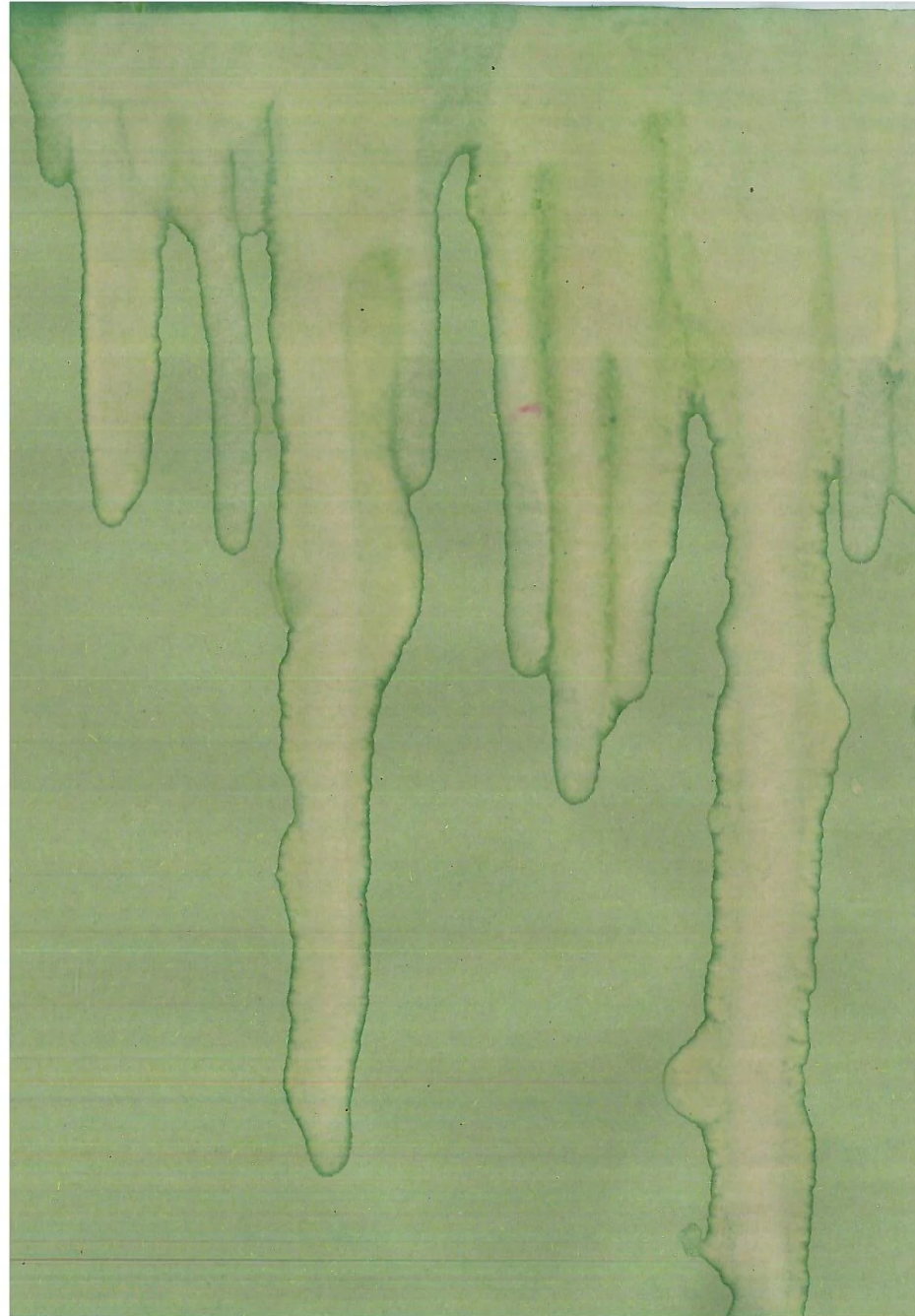
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Rising music star and East Midlands local sat down with Impact's Gemma Cockrell to speak about her love of song-writing, working with Matty Healy from The 1975 and her connection with the city of Nottingham.

Holly Humberstone started releasing music a mere two months before the start of the pandemic, and suddenly, she rose to immense fame without having ever even performed a live show. Now, just over a year after her debut EP *Falling Asleep At The Wheel* was released, she has delivered her second EP *The Walls Are Way Too Thin*.

"Opening back up after lockdown, it's been so bizarre," Humberstone admits. "Finally getting to do shows – I did my first ever headliners this summer! It's been lovely to meet people, and be able to thank them for listening to my music. It's weird, I've been releasing all of this music during lockdown. I haven't had the chance to see that these people actually exist in real life, but I haven't really ever known any different! I feel like I've missed out on a lot, but I'm so grateful that I can finally do shows."

At the time of interview, Holly was looking forward to the release of her second EP *The Walls Are Way Too Thin* at the beginning of November. "I feel like *Falling Asleep At The Wheel* was a time capsule for things that happened at school with the friends I grew up with. But I started writing *The Walls Are Way Too Thin* when I moved to London, in a time when I felt like everything was changing and nothing was familiar anymore. London is huge, but I moved into a little room on a whim with people I didn't know, in an area I had no clue about. I felt lonely and isolated; I had nothing homely to grasp onto. I was a bit lost and I didn't know who I was."



Whilst the title of the EP represents how Humberstone was feeling internally during this period of time, it simultaneously holds a much more literal meaning as well. "I confined myself to that room that I moved to and I was hearing all of these things going on outside. It was literal – I had such a lack of privacy because the walls were paper thin, but it was also metaphorical because it summed up what I was going through at the time," she explains.

"I think the phrase just summed up the whole EP for me. It's honest, genuine and 100% me," Humberstone neatly summarises the project. "I feel connected to it because all of it is about experiences that I've been through. I wasn't writing about anything crazy – everyone has had these same experiences, so it's universal, and hopefully people can connect to it and relate to what I was going through."



Humberstone hails from the town of Grantham, located on the border between Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, a mere thirty minutes away from the city centre of Nottingham. "In Grantham, I didn't have many friends who wanted to do music," she reflects. "My school didn't see it as a realistic career path. Coming home and writing songs was such a crucial part of my mental well-being, where I could forget about everything and just focus on music."

Whilst her hometown of Grantham did influence her, she cites the city of Nottingham as the place that truly shaped her as both an artist and songwriter. "Nottingham is a really special place to me. I get inspired by going out in

Nottingham with my friends and hearing about what they're going through. I wrote most of my first EP with Rob [Milton]," (who is a Nottingham-based producer), "either at home or in his basement in Nottingham, away from London and in my own familiar territory."





Rob became a regular collaborator of Humberstone's, returning to write *The Walls Are Way Too Thin* alongside her, as well as producing the EP. "When I moved to London, Rob also moved," she explains. "For the second EP, we invited new people to write with us. Writing is my favourite part of the job. We worked with Matty Healy from The 1975 on the track *Please Don't Leave Just Yet* – he is literally the coolest person in the world! I can't deny or confirm, but there might be more tunes coming your way that were written with Matty," she teases.

In terms of her favourite song on the six-track project, Humberstone has no difficulty in deciding that it's "definitely a song called *Scarlett*," despite assuring me that "all of them feel like they are [her] kids!" At the time of our conversation, *Scarlett* had not yet been heard by the world, but it ended up being released in September as a single ahead of the full EP.

Interestingly, the song was not written from Humberstone's own perspective. Instead, it was from the perspective of her friend *Scarlett*. "*Scarlett* is written about my best friend," she confirms, "who had been broken up with by a guy who was stringing her along and wasn't giving her any closure or explanation. She was still attached to him, but then a few months on, she realised that she was better than that. The song is a bit of an 'eff you' to him!" She laughs.

In the lead up to the release of *The Walls Are Way Too Thin*, Humberstone embarked on a UK tour throughout October and November, including a show at Nottingham's *Rescue Rooms* on 10th November. Her new EP, *The Walls Are Way Too Thin*, is out now.

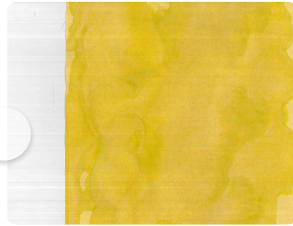
By Gemma Cockrell

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