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Through Her Eyes, Into Her Story: A musical album

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Through Her Eyes, Into Her Story

A musical album

By
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An Honors Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Graduation from the
Western Oregon University Honors Program

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Thesis Advisor

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Honors Program Director

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Abstract

The United States, like many other countries, has a dark history of gender discrimination and sexism geared towards women. Though centuries have passed, and progress has been made, this discrimination is still prevalent today. While the types of adversity that women are faced with vary in degrees of severity, adversity is always there in some form. To best address a topic as significant as this, attention is brought to the recurring struggles women face through the means of a collaborative concept album, written and performed entirely by the two female authors. The album serves as a reflection of the authors' own experiences as women, as well as conversations with other women. It aims to bring attention to this issue in a way that allows the audience to step back, reflect on their actions or how this topic has played a role in their lives, and hopefully spark change as they see the topic through a new perspective. This album will take the listeners through the different obstacles women are forced to face as they go through different stages of life, from early childhood into young adulthood. Through this outlet, the product accurately addresses the struggles that women face, and does so in a sensitive but straightforward manner.

Reflection

How We Got Here

It all began in March of 2017. We had already known each other as students, but this is when we became familiar with each other through the lens of our music. When we realized that we each had musical abilities, we began playing together. It started in Valsetz Dining Hall — Caity sat down at the piano, and Mikaela said, “Play me something.” And from there, we quickly figured out each others’ strengths. That’s when we began making our first videos. We filmed ourselves, mostly for us to watch later and laugh about, but for the first time we were recording the fun that we were having.

From then on, almost any time that we saw each other, we would create music in some way. When Mikaela came to Caity’s dorm, she’d pull out her old, out-of-tune guitar, and make it work. Mikaela would pick a song, and the two would figure it out on the spot. If Caity came to Mikaela’s house, we’d use the electric drums and all of the other instruments that Mikaela had, just messing around and playing for fun. Even when we had no instruments, we’d make it work. We can remember walking down the streets while in Ashland, Oregon for an Honors Program trip. Mikaela would beatbox to Michael Jackson’s “Billie Jean” while Caity would sing the melody — we wouldn’t allow being in a new city without instruments stop us from producing music.

Feeding off of this new found shared love for music, our friendship grew instantly. Music — listening to it, creating it, sharing what we love, and finding new music together — created a bond between us. We knew that we clicked as both friends and musicians. This was a time when we really got to know each other in both of these capacities. Musically, we quickly figured each other out. We knew that Caity was a soprano, Mikaela was an alto, so we would adjust our songs accordingly. We knew what kind of songs we enjoyed singing, and what kind of songs actually sounded good when we performed them. At the time, we were just having fun. But then, we decided to do a little bit more with this hobby.

We began posting videos to Instagram and Snapchat. Whenever we were together, we'd set a camera up and begin performing whatever song would come to mind. People quickly grew to enjoy this, commenting under the videos we would post frequently. That was when we found out that there were, in fact, people who also enjoyed the work that we produce, and that they wanted to see more of it.

From there, we decided that we wanted to start making our videos a request-based thing; we figured that, from the comfort of whoever's house we were at, with the chords and the lyrics readily available, we could make this work. We began taking any and all requests at this point: rap songs, songs that were so far from our normal genre, or even songs we had never heard of but listened to one time and made it work. This helped us grow as artists as we were able to quickly adapt to any situation.

Not only that, but we were able to take any song and quickly change it to match our style. It didn't matter if the song was originally grunge or punk, we would make it fit us. The ability to do this definitely came in handy later on.

We continued doing this for months, until the spring of 2018, when Mikaela approached Caity on campus. She had just gotten out of a meeting with Dr. Bob Hautala, more frequently referred to as Dr. H, where she confided in him and told him that she was thinking about leaving the Honors Program. The main reason for this was that she did not feel like she would have any interest in completing a thesis, where she would have to write more pages than she ever has on a topic she might not even be that interested in. That's when Dr. H proposed an idea that stuck with her: she could do an album. She hadn't realized at the time that this was even a possibility, but when she found out it was, she knew this is what she would be doing.

With this idea in mind, Mikaela felt not only comfortable, but excited. So, when Mikaela found Caity on campus, she shared this plan with her. Immediately, Caity agreed. We both knew that this is something we'd not only enjoy, but something we would actually do well with. We kept it in the back of our minds as we went into summer. When the end of summer rolled around, the two of us decided that us making an album alone would be perfect; we already knew each other's musical abilities and we knew they meshed perfectly together. So, by the fall of 2018, it was just us two, ready to take on a huge project. Mikaela contacted Caity before school started and asked, "Are

you sure you're still down to do the album?" Caity told her she definitely was. From there, we enrolled in the same thesis preparatory course, and began our planning.

As for planning, we weren't entirely sure what we wanted the theme of the album to be, but we had two ideas in mind. The first was a concept album that would encapsulate the sound, the feelings and the fears that are felt when one goes to war. Specifically, we were thinking to make the focus of it the Vietnam War, as this is the one that produced the most protest music that is still listened to to this day. We wanted the music to reflect all of the aspects of this time period. The other idea was a concept album about women. We wanted the album to cover what it means to be a woman, and to have it be a voice for all of the women we know of every age. In the end, we chose the latter. It was the only one of the two we could actually relate with, and ultimately, it was the one that we actually were excited about and were ready to write and produce music about.

With this plan in mind, and with our proposal approved, we knew we needed to start working more on our sound as musicians. In the past, what we were doing was only for fun. Now, we were ready to make it mean more than that. Mikaela already had the perfect opportunity, as she worked at Main St. Pub & Eatery. She spoke with her boss, and the next thing we knew, we were cleared to begin doing live-mic performances. Every Thursday at 9 p.m., we would take the stage at the Pub, performing from a list of songs that we had practiced and rehearsed well.

This was when we realized that we really knew each other as musicians. Whatever one person would do, the other person was already one step ahead of them. We knew when we wanted to slow the song down, when to speed it up, or when we wanted to switch to an entirely different song. We always knew what the other person was thinking. This made our performances stronger and made us feel more prepared to really begin working on our album, as we were confident that whatever direction it took, we would both be ready.

The live-mic performances began becoming really comfortable. One night, when we were on stage, we had run out of songs to sing and people still wanted more. So, for our encore, we decided to take a request. One person shouted from the crowd, “I Kissed a Girl” by Katy Perry. We had never sang this song together, and we had never even attempted any Katy Perry song at all. But, we did it. And when we were done, the crowd absolutely loved it. It was one of our most successful encores yet. It showed us capabilities that we didn’t realize we had.

On March 30, we had a gig that was entirely different than any we had done before. Dr. Gavin Keulks reached out to us at the end of the week prior to the event, and asked us if we would be interested in playing for the Honors Spring Gathering. Of course, we accepted the opportunity to hone our skills in front of a crowd. This would be our first paid gig. We began practicing profusely; we put in hours despite the fact that we were sick — we needed to subside our nerves by being as prepared as possible.

When March 30 finally arrived, we both took to the stage feeling ready, but also feeling anxious. As soon as we started, those feelings turned into excitement and serenity: we were exactly where we wanted to be. The performance went well, as people seemed to enjoy it and we felt entirely in our element. With this gig under our belts, along with some extra practice we continued over the summer, we finally felt ready to take on the production of our album. See Appendix B for photos of the Honors Spring Gathering, along with another performance we took on in July of 2019.

Concept Albums: A History

When deciding upon the theme of our album, one thing was certain: we wanted it to be a concept album. It made sense — our project follows a chronological order of what it means to be a woman from birth to being a college-age female; it's only right that we present that type of project in a concept album, as it all follows one single concept.

Concept albums have been around for as long as music has been recorded. In “Fancy Meeting You Here: Pioneers of the Concept Album” by Todd Decker, it is noted that, “The utility for a unifying theme or concept for a successful LP was recognized by the record industry from the start. Producers did not imagine that listeners wanted to sit through a twenty-minute pop song. Rather, meaningful arrangements of recordings...” (Decker, 2013). The idea to tie songs together through their very specifically decided arrangement is an idea that has been around for a long

time. While it did become quite popular in the mid-sixties, that obviously isn't when it began. "Groups celebrated in popular music history such as the Beatles and Beach Boys, did not invent the notion of the concept album or the LP as a unified form." (Decker, 2013).

Rather, one of the first artists to actually successfully create a concept LP was jazz producer and promoter Norman Granz. "In 1953 ... Granz pioneered the concept LP as a musical encounter with the release of *The Astaire Story*, a four-disc set..." (Decker, 2013). It's important to note that Granz's album was not the very first concept album, but it was one of the first successful in the form of an LP.

Another artist who was instrumental in the production of concept albums was Frank Zappa. (Borders, 2001). Zappa used several techniques similar to that of other notable artists of the time, including the usage of the "wall of sound" which was invented by Phil Spector, and other methods that were utilized by artists of the decade, such as Jimi Hendrix or the Beach Boys. But Zappa, unlike these artists, thought of all of his music as a concept, of sorts. "This tendency toward repetition and variation is the musical embodiment of what Zappa called 'Conceptual Continuity.' Zappa himself once remarked that all the recordings he made over his career were interconnected like the bands of an enormous LP." (Borders, 2001).

While both of these artists' contributions to the idea of a concept album are important, it's also important to look at the ones who are thought of specifically when

one thinks of a concept album. For many, us included, the thought immediately goes to Roger Waters and Pink Floyd. Almost every one of their albums are concept albums: “Wish You Were Here,” “Dark Side of the Moon,” and “The Wall” are some that people would initially think of. (Rose, 2015). In his book, “Roger Waters and Pink Floyd: The Concept Albums” Phil Rose is able to aptly discuss the reasons that Pink Floyd’s concept albums have reached such immense success. “Their words and sounds work together to communicate one fundamental concern ... they are all characterized by their ‘affirmation of human values against everything that conspires against them in life.’” (Rose, 2015). This notion was important for us to keep in mind as we went into the production of our concept album, as that was what we were trying to do — we wanted our words and our sounds that we chose to use to reflect a fundamental concern: the oppression and the obstacles that we, as women, or the women that we know have faced.

Rose’s book delves into one song specifically by Pink Floyd, which uses techniques that we considered utilizing in our production. In the song “On the Run,” Rose notes that Waters uses several important aspects to reach the sound that is most effective, especially after it comes out of the opening song on “Dark Side of the Moon,” “Breathe.” Some of these techniques include the repetition of a woman’s voice, which Rose notes as a motherly sound as it is used throughout several songs, the manipulation of sound to make it sound like it is “running in circles,” the “persistent footsteps” — all

of these are used to create unity throughout the song, and ultimately, throughout the entire album.

Tackling Controversy Through Music

Unsurprisingly, our goal in the creation of this album was to take on a problem that has plagued itself upon society, and potentially, make a shred of difference in the world. If even one person hears the album and changes their behavior or way of thinking in any way, then we will have reached our goal. Now, obviously, we are not the first people to try and make a difference through music. In fact, it's something that is actually done quite often. Obviously, in the time of the Vietnam War and with a counterculture taking over America, there was music that made this their goal specifically. We had Bob Dylan singing "Blowing in the Wind," we had the Beatles performing "Revolution," the Rolling Stones with "Paint it Black," Hendrix with "All Along the Watchtower" — the music that was the "counterculture" of the time has become what we often associate with the primary culture of the '60s. But, at the time, it was controversial. While singing about controversial topics has been a prevalent part of society, since this time, there haven't been many albums surrounded just on what it means to be a woman, and the pressures and obstacles women face, specifically.

That being said, it certainly can't be denied that it has been a legitimate issue. In their book, "Packaging Girlhood: Rescuing Our Daughters from Marketers' Schemes,"

Lamb and Brown clearly outline several of the issues that are at play from the time girls are old enough to have any preconceived notion of what girls should be impressed upon them. It discusses several of the stereotypes, talking about how “Your littlest girls are ‘perfect little angels,’ sometimes with a sassy twist,” or how “your elementary school girls are boy-crazy tweens.” (Lamb & Brown, 2006). This book goes on to describe how to get your daughters, specifically, to learn about what stereotypes are, and being aware of such stereotypes can actually save your daughters from them. Though their form of facing controversy is through a book, rather than music like ours, it still makes it clear that there is a problem in regards to the way women are perceived, even from a young age.

A way to really analyze how music works when it comes to using it in regards to controversial topics, and one such subfield that is good to use as comparison, is music that is used through art therapy. Music therapy is often used to help people overcome the obstacles they were faced with that got them to that point. Our music, in a way, will do a similar thing. Eyerman and Jamison (2011) discuss their interest in “social movements, particularly with music, as this type of cultural activity contributes ‘to the ideas that movements offer and create in opposition to the existing social and cultural orders’” (p. 24). Eyerman and Jamison (1998) state that music is, in some instances, “truth-bearing and knowledge-producing.” (Eyerman and Jamison, 2011). Their use of music in art therapy has a goal of bringing out truth, and to help in creating

knowledge on a subject. For this reason, they support having music be a part of art therapy. Ultimately, they describe music to be incredibly important when it comes to the social functions of it, which is why we hoped for our album to be successful. We wanted it to have a function in society that brings truth not only through our lyrics, but through the voices of the people we are creating this music for. As Eyerman and Jamison put it, “Music’s active properties may help forge social constructs within a particular cultural context where it reflects specific meanings,” (2011). With music, and with our album, we are going to be able to cover a controversial topic such as the social constructs that have been established as a result of years of instilled inequality between men and women.

Songwriting and Production Techniques: What is Successful?

When we were initially considering this topic and how we wanted to go about approaching it, there was one thing we were certain of: we wanted to evoke emotions in our listeners. We wanted them to hear the words we were saying, and be able to make an impact in their lives through the presentation of our music. In order to do that, we had to do some research on what “good” or effective songwriting and production might look like.

Firstly, what we found is that in the history of music production, it has mostly been a male-dominated field. (Negus, 1992). Though this isn’t necessarily a surprise, it

is still worth noting. If the majority of the work that we are using as our inspiration has been produced by men, we must keep that in mind when it comes to the production of our own work. Yes, we can be inspired by these artists and these activists. However, we must remember that, up until recently, all of the music we use as activism has been created by men — which isn't exactly empowering for women. We needed to use this fact to our advantage, to show that an album can and will be produced and written entirely by females. Because ultimately, as Negus put it, “the production of popular music involves a continual ‘dialogue with the past,’” meaning that our music must keep in mind the things that have been done previously and utilize those techniques. (Negus, 1992).

Another important note made by Negus is that in production, one of the most important performances is that of the vocalist, as the voice is what “most directly addresses the listener,” and “most directly communicates the emotion of the particular song.” (Negus, 1992) This is something we also wanted to keep in mind, because the entire goal of the album was to make the listener feel something — and we knew that likely would be achieved through our vocals. This meant that we needed to put a large focus on it.

With that emotion that we were aiming to grasp at, research has shown that music is the key way to get to it. “Music, like odours, seems to be a very powerful cue in bringing emotional experiences from memory back into awareness.” (Sherer & Zentner,

2001) The reason for this is simple: “music is a pervasive element of social life.” (Sherer & Zentner, 2001). Sherer and Zentner actually created an algorithm to determine the emotion-level of a song, which incorporated the following elements: performance features, structural features, the listener’s features, and the contextual features. (2001). While this algorithm is by no means perfect, it certainly is worth noting as it addresses some aspects that we had to keep in mind to reach the level of writing and production we were hoping to attain.

With a topic such as this, it was vital that we considered every aspect going into it: we weren’t just writing this for fun, we were writing it to make a difference. We weren’t writing about a light topic, we were writing about one that is incredibly sensitive and can easily impact anyone who listens to it — not just females, but any gender. For this reason, we had to keep these researcher’s findings in mind — we wanted to tackle this project with the most decency and respectfulness, whilst still maintaining effectiveness, possible.

Writing and Producing the Album

The first song was written while sitting in a park during summer of 2019, with only a guitar, our voices, and an idea of what we wanted this album to be. From there, everything else fell into place. Caity would write ideas for lyrics in the back of her journals during class; Mikaela would fill pages with concepts that we knew we wanted

to express. We would meet once a week during Mikaela's office hours to share what we had written, edit what we had come up with, and utilize our very few shared hours to get creative.

Between a couple meetings with our adviser, Dr. Dirk Freymuth, and our producer, Ethan Wilson, before we knew it, we had a full album written. This wasn't a simple task; it involved us changing the concept from what we originally had planned. In the beginning, the album was to be performed in an order of age; the first song would be about the struggles women face as children, then as teens, and so on. However, we quickly realized that was not the most effective strategy. Instead, we moved towards our project being about the level of awareness that one has about the struggles of a woman over time. When you're young, you're naive to these obstacles. So naive, it's almost laughable. As you get older, you notice the subtle struggles as well as the blatant ones; this was the new structure. So, we reorganized the album to match this, fine-tuned lyrics, and rewrote melodies and harmonies several times. Suddenly, it was time to produce.

We had a limited amount of time for production. Our goal was to begin recording and finish recording within the time span of January 2020 to the end of March 2020. This meant we had to work hard, and work quickly. The plan was essentially to meet in the studio every other week, to give ourselves a bit of a break after grueling, long recording sessions. The first official session, aside from any practice

sessions or the ones where we had already recorded piano, was January 31. On this day, Mikaela performed nearly every song on guitar, so we could have that as a base for the rest of our recording sessions. She came back in on February 10 to record any other guitar solos she wanted to add in, as well as all of the bass parts. Our next session was February 13, and at this session, Mikaela recorded the drums for every song; this session was so demanding, she ended up breaking a drumstick mid-song. February 28 was vocal day. On this day, Caity and Mikaela recorded all but two of the songs, as Caity was pushing through feeling sick as she was performing. This was just as COVID-19 was becoming prevalent in the U.S., so nobody at the studio wanted to take any chances. They decided to end the session early. We came back to finish up vocals for the last two songs at a later date, but as we entered the studio to record, the computers stopped working. Then, as we were about to reschedule, Mikaela checked her phone and saw that Oregon was ordering closures of many businesses due to COVID-19. This would be the last time we would meet in the studio.

Although we weren't finished with our album, there wasn't much we could do. Social distancing was preventing us from being able to meet in person; Mikaela and Caity would meet over FaceTime to practice and discuss any last minute changes we might want to make, but it was impossible to record when we were all stuck in our homes. Once things began to lighten up a bit, though, we were able to record our final song. This time, it was from the studio inside our producer's home on April 16. As we

walked away that evening, we left with a feeling of accomplishment knowing that despite all of the changes that were thrown at us with the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to get every song recorded.

Through Her Eyes, Into Her Story

In this section, the lyrics for each song, presented in the organization of the digital album, are outlined. Along with this, this section will provide a little bit of background as to the goal for the song, why it was written, and what led to our writing this song. Each song served a designated purpose on the album, each written to evoke a specific feeling from the listeners, and were written in an intentional way with this goal in mind.

While this is only the written form of the “Through Her Eyes, Into Her Story,” the produced album can be found digitally through Soundcloud. See Appendix A for a link, as well as a QR code, to the album. We do recommend listening to it in this form, along with reading the written form, as each song was produced with a specific purpose in mind, as well.

1. Mirage

Background

In approaching writing the introduction to the album, Mikaela and Caity wanted the lyrics to reflect a perspective of naivete. This song is written through the lens of a person who is dramatically oblivious to the obstacles that are markedly prevalent for women. It's a feel-good song upon first listen, mimicking the overproduction of musicals and showtunes, with the goal of strongly juxtaposing the instrumental with lyrics that ring painfully true for many women. As it begins, it introduces "women" to the world with a feeling of joy, happiness, and luck. But as the song progresses, the struggles become increasingly more difficult. It introduces the listener to an album that will lead them through a myriad of feelings, emotions, and reflections.

Lyrics

Verse 1

On the day she was born, her mother held her tight,
Looked at the beauty in her arms and knew she'd be alright.
She remembered when they said, "Congrats, it's a girl,"
And from that moment knew she would be safe in this world.

Verse 2

Growing up as a woman means her fate is decided,
She'll be treated as an equal, nothing will be one-sided.
She'll never be taunted or scared walking at night,
She'll never face oppression or have to fight for her rights.

Chorus

She'll never have to suffer,
She'll live life in comfort,
She'll never know injustice,
And she'll get to be a mother.
She'll never feel true pain in life,
She'll feel nothing but joy,
So lucky when she was born
They didn't say "It's a boy."

Verse 3

Her mom will never sit her down and teach her to fight,
Teach her what to wear, how to say no but be polite.
Her mom will never feel the pain when she comes home confused,

Says that her fighting didn't work and her body had been used.

Chorus

She'll never have to suffer,

She'll live life in comfort,

She'll never know injustice,

And she'll get to be a mother.

She'll never feel true pain in life,

She'll feel nothing but joy,

So lucky when she was born

They didn't say "It's a boy."

(Instrumental)

Chorus

She'll never have to suffer,

She'll live life in comfort,

She'll never know injustice,

And she'll get to be a mother.

She'll never feel true pain in life,

She'll feel nothing but joy,
So lucky when she was born
they didn't say "It's a boy."
(They didn't say it's a boy)
She'll never have to suffer,
She'll live life in comfort,
(She'll live life in comfort)
She'll never know injustice,
And she'll get to be a mother.
She'll never feel true pain in life,
She'll feel nothing but joy,
So lucky when she was born,
So lucky when she was born,
So lucky when she was born,
They didn't say "It's a —
Boy."

2. Mama knows

Background

Following the upbeat feeling that comes from “Mirage,” “Mama knows” aims to represent the fact that, often, the obstacles that women face and live through are from women’s own internalized and generational oppression. This song is written from the perspective of a young woman who repeats what her mother tells her — the feeling of inadequacy women struggle with when there is never a perfect way to “be a woman,” as often what we are told to do is not justified, or impossible to accomplish. Ultimately, the theme of the song is that, regardless of how we feel about the things we are forced to do based on our gender, or regardless of how we are thought of or treated, we have to accept the fact that this is simply how things are — society trains us to believe that these things are unchangeable.

Lyrics

Verse 1

Fetch this, fetch that,

She says I’m too skinny, too fat.

She says to be quiet, speak up,

She says I wear too much makeup.

Cross your legs, sit still,

Be assertive, whoa chill.

Chorus

Listen to me and one day you'll know

How to be a good girl who does what she's told.

Listen to me and one day you'll know

How to be a good girl because I said so.

Verse 2

Don't shout, don't scream,

She says be submissive, not extreme.

She says do the dishes, help me cook,

She says go make the bed, read a book.

Cross your legs, sit still,

Be assertive, whoa chill.

Chorus

Listen to me and one day you'll know
How to be a good girl who does what she's told.
Listen to me and one day you'll know
How to be a good girl because I said so.

Verse 3

Wear this, cover up,
Make sure you don't show them too much.
Be sensitive, care for others,
What do you mean you won't be a mother?

Cross your legs, sit still,
Be assertive, whoa chill.

Chorus

Listen to me and one day you'll know
How to be a good girl who does what she's told.
Listen to me and one day you'll know
How to be a good girl because I said so.

(Instrumental)**Bridge**

Behave yourself, don't lie,

'cause I said so, that's why.

Who cares if they just call you crazy?

That's just 'cause you are a lady.

Who cares if they just call you crazy?

That's just 'cause you are a lady.

That's just 'cause you are a lady.

(Hey, hey)

That's just 'cause you are a lady.

(Hey, hey)

That's just 'cause you are a lady.

(Hey! Hey!)

3. For a good time call

Background

The internalized discrimination that is learned by women, as emphasized in the previous song, “Mama knows,” matures into an active form of judgement that comes in the form of slut shaming. This is something that many women experience in their later middle school and high school years, when they are treated as inferior for whether they are or are not sexually active. This song sheds light on the types of accusations and insults aimed at women during this time in their lives. However, it’s told from another woman in the same age group, accentuating the fact that, often, discrimination against women comes from a place of internalized maltreatment.

Lyrics

Verse 1

The rumors are written on the bathroom walls,
The whispers echo all through the halls.
We know where she’s been and we know with who,
The boys wait in line and we know what they do.
The names she’s called are ones that she’s earned,
It’s not unfair, it’s what she deserves.

That's what you get, just being upfront,
There's a reason everyone calls you a slut.

Chorus

Doesn't she know, doesn't she care
What everyone thinks and the way that they stare?
Doesn't she see when she walks down the halls
She is the reason for all the catcalls? And
She deserves whatever she gets,
A life like hers will lead to regrets.
Doesn't she hear the things that they say?
Girls like her give girls a bad name.

Verse 2

She shows it all off, there's nothing she hides,
Like having the attention makes her a prize.
She doesn't give a damn 'bout her reputation,
She leaves nothing to imagination. And
Doesn't she know sometimes less is more,
Instead of flaunting it looking like a whore?

One day when she takes off all her makeup,
She'll look in the mirror and see she's all used up.

Chorus

Doesn't she know, doesn't she care
What everyone thinks and the way that they stare?
Doesn't she see when she walks down the halls
She is the reason for all the catcalls? And
She deserves whatever she gets,
A life like hers will lead to regrets.
Doesn't she hear the things that they say?
Girls like her give girls a bad name.

Bridge

You get what you deserve when you act that way,
What do you expect when it's all on display?
The guys might love you now but just wait and see,
Soon they won't be asking you for a date.
You get what you deserve when you act that way,
What do you expect when it's all on display?

They might love you now but wait and see,
Before you know it you will be history.

Chorus

Doesn't she know, doesn't she care
What everyone thinks and the way that they stare?
Doesn't she see when she walks down the halls
She is the reason for all the catcalls? And
She deserves whatever she gets,
A life like hers will lead to regrets.
Doesn't she hear the things that they say?
Girls like her give girls a bad name.
Girls like her give girls a bad name.
Girls like her give girls a bad name.

4. You're mine

Background

This song marks a turning point in one's sense of awareness regarding how many obstacles women truly face, and how deep internalized biases can run. On the surface, it's a typical love song, sampling the sounds of the 1950s and 1960s with chord progressions and an instrumental often utilized when one is singing of affection and admiration. It tells the story of a woman who has quickly fallen in love with a person, and due to the fact that she was taught from so young that things are simply meant to go a certain way for women, she is unable to notice the red flags in an abusive and manipulative relationship. The incessant need to know where she is at all times, the concept that there is only room for this one person in her life, the feeling of being owned or property are all red flags that are ignored throughout the song until the very end. And by then, it was too late.

Lyrics

Verse 1

Just took one moment when —
when we locked eyes.

The room fell silent, I —

I was hypnotized.

And since that first day,

there could only be you.

Two kids in love,

nothing I wouldn't do.

Chorus

Only thinking of you, only being with you.

All through the day and the night

Checking what I'm up to.

Falling in love's easy to do when I always stay true.

Only thinking of you, only being with you.

Verse 2

Said I was perfect just for you,

never questioned your ways.

I stood behind you through it all,

you always led the way.

And if I ever thought to stray,

you'd keep me in line,

Remind me where I'm meant to be
by saying "You're mine."

Chorus

Only thinking of you, only being with you.
All through the day and the night
Checking what I'm up to.
Falling in love's easy to do when I always stay true.
Only thinking of you, only being with you.

Bridge

My mama always said this is just how it is,
A woman's only job is to serve and have kids.
I learned from the way she was always to blame,
I learned a woman's worth, knew I deserved the same.

Chorus

Only thinking of you, only being with you.
All through the day and the night
Checking what I'm up to —

Only thinking of you, only being with you.

All through the day and the night

Checking what I'm up to.

Falling in love's easy to do when I always stay true.

Only thinking of you, only being with you.

Outro

For all these years,

I thought I was fine.

If only someone

Had shown me the signs.

5. One in five

Background

From this point of the album on, things shift towards the darker. Once one fully realizes that women do have additional obstacles and hurdles that they are forced to overcome, the obstacles become all the more noticeable — and often, dangerous. This song is a glimpse into what it feels like to be a woman at night. The feeling of your heart pounding in your chest as you realize that there is only you — or worse, there is someone else that you don't know. This song explores the reality of cat calling, and the fear that it strikes within a woman. What might appear to be playful and fun to the perpetrators can truly feel paralyzing and terrifying for the woman on the receiving end.

Lyrics

Verse 1

Off late, dark out.

Walking home all by myself.

Mace ready, keys clenched.

Wandering eyes but I don't flinch.

Verse 2

“Aye mama, smile for me.”

Don't give them what they're looking for.

“You know you want to, do it for me.”

You give in once they'll just want more.

Chorus

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound, sound, sound.

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound, sound, sound.

Verse 3

Walk fast, he's catching up,

Someone please, pick up.

Heart pounds, chest hurts.

Why'd I have to wear a fucking skirt?

Chorus

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound, sound, sound.

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound, sound, sound.

Bridge

"Don't walk away when I'm talking to you,

Since you're dressed like that, it means that you want me, too.

(I said) Hey don't walk away when I'm talking to you,

You know that I don't bite unless you want me to.

(I said) Hey don't walk away when I'm talking to you,

I don't see a man so where are you headed to?

(I said) Hey don't walk away when I'm talking to you,

Take a look around it's just me and you.”

Chorus

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound, sound, sound.

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound, sound, sound.

Keep going, going, going,

Looking down, down, down,

Don't attract any attention,

Not a sound —

6. Last call

Background

As the previous song ends on a cliffhanger, this one tells a story in full. It was written based on a story we had once heard about a woman who was murdered for simply saying “No, thank you” to a man who had asked her out. We chose to write the story from a bar, because even though our story’s protagonist followed all the “advice” she had always heard — don’t get too drunk, always have a friend with you — it still ends in her grisly demise. All it took was her choosing to politely reject a man who had approached her, proving that no matter what a woman says or no matter how many “rules” she follows, some obstacles can never be overcome.

Lyrics

Verse 1

Lights illuminated the empty glass

on the bar resting closeby.

I watched as she waited while she checked her phone

to see a text or to check the time.

From the end of the bar I saw her pause

when the bartender caught her eye.

He asked her if she wanted another one,

She said no, but she didn't say why.

(No but she didn't say why)

Chorus

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Verse 2

Time passed by, people came and went,

Still she sat alone for a while.

Until from across the room he made his way

With a drink in his hand and a smile.

He whispered in her ear something under his breath,

I could see she wasn't sure what to do.

She turned to him and gave a half smile,

All she said was "no, thank you."

(All she said was "no, thank you")

Chorus

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Verse 3

I saw him follow her out the bar,

I grabbed my coat and I made my way.

She walked alone but he was closeby,

Taking every turn that she would take.

He got closer to her with every step,

I couldn't keep up, they got ahead.

They turned a corner and both were gone,

It was the last I saw of them.

(I never saw them again)

Chorus

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Bridge

Everyday since then I thought of them

And I hoped she was still fine.

Until the other day I turned on the news

And what I saw made me cry.

A girl had died somewhere nearby

She was found by someone passing through.

But only I know that her final words

To the man were “no, thank you.”

(All she said was “no, thank you.”)

Chorus

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did.

Oh, no matter what she said.

Oh, no matter what she did. Oh —

7. “Boys will be boys”

Background

This final song comes full circle with the first song, pairing a somber feeling with an uplifted one. This song is unique as compared to all the others because it’s written almost entirely out of quotes from other women. It gives a voice to the women who have been abused, mistreated, assaulted, and raped. It is a compilation of their quotes and testimonies coming out against their abusers, or speaking out about the rights of women. In the lyrics below, any part within quotations was directly quoted from one of these women: Emily Doe, Hillary Clinton, Jessica Thomashow, Billie Jean King, Serena Williams, Christine Blasey Ford, Donna Markham and Anita Hill. It aims to point out that our work as women is not done, or even close to it. But we are resilient, we are powerful, and we will persist.

Lyrics

Intro

They say that boys will be boys, but time is up,

It’s time to listen to the women that have had enough.

Boys will be boys, don’t care what they say.

Now you’ll listen to us, “That’s why you’re here today.”

Verse 1

“Women’s rights are human rights,” no more hiding blatant violence.

When you did what you did “Everything inside of me was silenced.”

“I try just not to think about it,” but I can’t just let it be,

“My damage was internal ... I carry it with me.”

Chorus

Listen to the women who were voiceless for so long,

Their cries have gone unheard, it’s time to right the wrong.

We’re done with staying silent, we’re screaming “me too,”

“You took advantage of my innocence” and finally I’m through.

Verse 2

To the woman who showed emotion, you’re not “hysterical” or broken,

We know when a man does the same, he’s thought of as “outspoken.”

To the woman who “tried to yell for help” but he put his hand over your mouth

To silence you from reaching out, you’re not alone, not hopeless.

And to the girl who was too young, the one that we stand for,

“She took her own life because she couldn’t take the pain anymore.”

Chorus

Listen to the women who were voiceless for so long,
Their cries have gone unheard, it's time to right the wrong.
We're done with staying silent, we're screaming "me too,"
"You took advantage of my innocence" and finally I'm through.

Verse 3

We know it would have been "more comfortable to remain silent,"
But I'm done being afraid, you can't keep me quiet.
I'm telling all our stories, we won't let you interrupt,
It's time to take responsibility for your own conduct.

Chorus

Listen to the women who were voiceless for so long,
Their cries have gone unheard, it's time to right the wrong.
We're done with staying silent, we're screaming "me too,"
"You took advantage of my innocence" and finally I'm through.

Outro

You say that boys will be boys, but I'm tired of empty words,
Because "I fought and I fought," it's getting harder to endure.
You say that boys will be boys, but women will be women,
And we're not giving up, what's been done is not forgiven.

Appendix A



Scan this QR Code to

listen to the album:



Link to album:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-961082033/sets/through-her-eyes-into-her-story>

Appendix B



Pictured above: Mikaela and Caity perform at the 2019 Honors Program Spring Gathering.



Pictured left: Caity and Mikaela perform at Independence's Hop and Heritage festival in July of 2019.

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