

The Prodigal Daughter

Taylor Power (Bonus Track)



Raffy cat eating breakfast after staying up all night playing TS!

Raffy (he who must be obeyed) cat, kept me awake all night with a 186 Taylor Swift song playlist and he refused to turn it down until I added to what he reckons was a completely superficial initial survey of Swift Power. He was disgusted that I did not understand the true significance of the “22” hat. He also reckoned, The Beatles 1964 (not 1968) invasion of Australia, no comparison with TS Power: . the Beatles on the balcony of the Southern Cross Hotel in Melbourne, 15,000 people at most, maybe 3500 people at their concert; Taylor filled the MCG three times in a row with Grand Final crowds. So please... Okay Raff point taken. He then went on to pontificate about many other serious questions including of course Taylor’s preference for cats over dogs... This alone, according to Raffy, indicates that Taylor is superior to most other human beings. The thing is Raff is correct that Swift Power deserves much more understanding, but my problem is that the more you look at Taylor Swift’s songs and words the deeper and harder you have to go, not something to be accomplished quickly or easily.

Karma Era

“The world moves on, another day, another drama, drama
But not for me, not for me, all I think about is karma”

What era does Taylor Swift represent? What does it all mean? If like Elvis and the Beatles TS represents a new era? What is it? Is it simply the era of kindness and decency? Yes but there is an edge to T. Swift. There are many hidden little allies and side streets. She is someone who a young girl can grow with and be guided through treacherous areas like body image, sexuality, patriarchy. People call her mother, maybe that is the ultimate compliment for a leader in our world. In the Swift era it is ok again, even wonderful, to get excited about innocence, friendship bracelets and crying about silly things and please don't let anyone rain on your parade. It is ok to be in love with a football hero and have a good, majestic boring life where love is the binding agreement and making cinnamon scrolls is enough. All this transcends matters of race, sexual preference and politics. There is this fundamental value system that runs through us all. Even Nick Cave, the ultimate bad seed agrees. Ok Raff?

Hymns of our Times: Mad Woman, Is it Over Now, Don't Blame Me, Lover

"Mad Woman" is a hymn and anthem for our times:

It begins:

"What did you think I'd say to that?
Does a scorpion sting when fighting back?
They strike to kill and you know I will
You know I will
What do you sing on your drive home?
Do you see my face in the neighbour's lawn?
Does she smile?
Or does she mouth, "Fuck you forever"?"

And then the bridge:

"And there's nothin' like a mad woman
What a shame she went mad
No one likes a mad woman
You made her like that
And you'll poke that bear 'til her claws come out
And you find something to wrap your noose around
And there's nothin' like a mad woman"

What a powerful warning to young women and a strong message: you don't have to take it!
Could the "masters of spin" be talking about our first woman PM Julia Gillard? And the "ditch the witch" protests outside Parliament House?

Might we throw in the attempt by defence lawyers to argue for the image of the hysterical woman in rape cases? Could we add Brittany Higgins damned for her every move? Grace Tame so many others.. women at home or at work.. taken down by a whisper campaign or worse. And don't forget:

"..women like hunting witches, too
Doing your dirtiest work for you".

So if Fran Leibowitz cannot identify one Taylor Swift song, that's on her, because she should know this one.

Taylor Swift is for passionate, outspoken, forthright women leaders of the future who won't fall for it again. What a wonderful war cry of resistance? And is there anything to match it in 'cooler' genres of music? Little Taylor comes of age and leads generations of young and old women to a wider consciousness and understanding. So different and so radical compared to the "bitch" rap of so much contemporary music with its emphasis on sexual conformity and obsequious obedience to macho males, dare I say it.

Like any great artistry sometimes the imagery carries over as metaphors for our times:

Baby, was it over
When she laid down on your couch?
Was it over when he unbuttoned my blouse?
"Come here," I whispered in your ear
In your dream as you passed out, baby
Was it over then?
And is it over now?

Are these lines about Harvey Weinstein's Hollywood, Jeffrey Epstein's political den of inequity or Donald Trump's world of unabashed sexual harassment... the world in which images and stereotypes prevail over humanity, feeling and love..

Is this era of predation over? Or does it continue?

But the hymns are not just negative? Taylor Swift embodies a new sexiness that is simply lovely and which embraces all of the enchanting qualities of woman hood and femininity that simply sweeps us into new dimensions of appreciation. How crazy would it be to try to control such creativity?

I love the all of nothing love lines.

"Don't blame me, love made me crazy
If it doesn't, you ain't doin' it right
Lord, save me, my drug is my baby
I'll be usin' for the rest of my life

What could be nice than to be Taylor Swift's lover?

"We could leave the Christmas lights up 'til January
And this is our place, we make the rules
And there's a dazzling haze, a mysterious way about you dear
Have I known you 20 seconds or 20 years?

Can I go where you go?
Can we always be this close forever and ever?
And ah, take me out, and take me home
You're my, my, my, my
Lover"

We could let our friends crash in the living room
This is our place, we make the call
And I'm highly suspicious that everyone who sees you wants you
I've loved you three summers now, honey, but I want 'em all"

Make no mistake this is the definition of a beautiful relationship, a partnership in which women define the terms and unashamedly and proudly describe an intimacy that is simply delightful. And if the world is bombing itself to pieces or destroying the environment.. this is what its missing.

“This night is sparkling, don't you let it go
I'm wonderstruck, blushing all the way home
I'll spend forever wondering if you knew
This night is flawless, don't you let it go
I'm wonderstruck, dancing around all alone
I'll spend forever wondering if you knew
I was enchanted to meet you

Please don't be in love with someone else
Please don't have somebody waiting on you”

The bodies of the TS team can be defined by their enthusiasm, skill and joy not their form. There is also something amazingly cool about the TS costumery which ranges from Cinderella to Barbarella. Above all TS's legs and athleticism just seem to improve and become more sexy with age. She says she is trying to fit everything in before she reaches her Hollywood use by date but in a world in which Mick Jagger and Paul Mc Cartney and her namesake James Taylor are still touring there will never be a time when Taylor Swift will not be appreciated and loved.

The Prodigal Daughter

“And if they call me a (Slut)
You know it might be worth it for once
And if I'm gonna be (Drunk)
I might as well be drunk in love”

There is an interview on Instagram where TS talks about the impossibility of having a flat stomach and a nice arse.. In the semi-documentary film *Miss Americana* she nervously orders tacos and finally offers a revelation to her song writing partner.. I have to eat for the energy I need. Its like she is navigating the world for young women. And the body we see in the sequined leotards is that of an amazing performer who does three and a half hour shows, could there be anything more attractive, engaging and sexy and beautiful.

But then there are always the anxieties..

“It's me, hi, I'm the problem, it's me
At tea time, everybody agrees
I'll stare directly at the sun but never in the mirror
It must be exhausting always rooting for the anti-hero”

Whether its getting revenge on mean critics or boy friends or friends who would not go with her to the mall.. Taylor Swift is always the prodigal daughter turning around making it all right..

“So this is me swallowin' my pride
Standin' in front of you sayin' I'm sorry for that night
And I go back to December all the time
It turns out freedom ain't nothin' but missin' you
Wishin' I'd realized what I had when you were mine
I'd go back to December, turn around and make it alright
I go back to December all the time”

She is always returning home.. turning up at just the right time, improbably..

“I am not the kind of girl
Who should be rudely barging in on a white-veil occasion

But you are not the kind of boy
Who should be marrying the wrong girl

And then there is another temperature rising, remarkable bridge:

"So don't say yes, run away now
I'll meet you when you're out of the church at the back door
Don't wait or say a single vow
You need to hear me out, they said, "Speak now"

You'll say, "Let's run away now (run away now)
I'll meet you when I'm out of my tux at the back door
Baby, I didn't say my vows (say a single vow)
So glad you were around when they said, 'Speak now'"

The prodigal daughter's adventures come racing in through an ever uplifting chorus..

"You were drivin' the getaway car
We were flyin', but we'd never get far
Don't pretend it's such a mystery
Think about the place where you first met me
Ridin' in a getaway car
There were sirens in the beat of your heart
Should've known I'd be the first to leave
Think about the place where you first met me
In a getaway car, oh-oh-oh
No, they never get far, oh-oh-ah
No, nothin' good starts in a getaway car"

These bridges are masterpieces of rejection and redemption:

"I said remember this moment
In the back of my mind
The time we stood with our shaking hands
The crowds in stands went wild
We were the kings and the queens
And they read off our names
The night you danced like you knew our lives
Would never be the same
You held your head like a hero
On a history book page
It was the end of a decade
But the start of an age

Long live the walls we crashed through
How the kingdom lights shined just for me and you
I was screaming, "Long live all the magic we made"
And bring on all the pretenders
One day we will be remembered"

Australia's Obsession?

Fran Lebowitz in Melbourne with Taylor last week, along with the Fonz, observed that the only country outside America that was so totally obsessed with Taylor was Australia. Why? The usual

acerbic Lebowitz, a back handed reference to White Australia, particularly sensitive given the shameful October 2023 Referendum result.

But as Raffy reminds me Australia had 4 million yes voters, and a majority of Americans are still opposed and incensed by Trump.. Taylor Swift is up there in that proud mob.

One things for sure.. no writer can compose a better bridge/chorus than Taylor Swift:

“You, with your words like knives
And swords and weapons that you use against me
You have knocked me off my feet again
Got me feeling like I'm nothing
You, with your voice like nails on a chalkboard
Calling me out when I'm wounded
You, pickin' on the weaker man

[Pre-Chorus]

Well, you can take me down
With just one single blow
But you don't know what you don't know

[Chorus]

Someday, I'll be livin' in a big, ole city
And all you're ever gonna be is mean
Someday, I'll be big enough so you can't hit me
And all you're ever gonna be is mean”

The Private Jet

If there was a holy person who travelled the world spreading good will and fairy dust to all should we really complain about the environmental cost of the fuel she needs for transport? Its a bit like complaining about the gas emissions of Santas reindeers.

And is there a fault here in the first place. Do we doubt Taylor Swift’s consciousness of climate change? The violent wet season storms that inter-rupted her first night in Sydney, the bush fires in Victoria are in her world karma of some kind or another.

Dont be surprised if, like the \$100,000 payments to her crew, the Swift team do something extraordinary to offset her carbon emissions.I cannot think of anyone better to spend her multi-millions on good causes and effective change.

Peace

In all of this..

“But I'm a fire, and I'll keep your brittle heart warm
If your cascade ocean wave blues come
All these people think love's for show
But I would die for you in secret

The devil's in the details, but you got a friend in me
Would it be enough if I could never give you peace?"

Many people come to Australia and do not or cannot take the time to feel the deep meaning of the place that transcends the Australian State and colonial society. Peace is the gift of this ancient continent in which Old Man Dungala overshadows even the Tennessee reaches of Old Man River, the Mississippi, by thousands of years. Mississippi is the young one still breaking her banks and still finding her way.. our old rivers chartered their course a millenia ago. I hope TS and her family and friends find the peace that she thinks has eluded her. Taylor has been here before and has changed the world with her songs, lyrics and performance artistry, her timetable is made for years into the future.. but there is peace here for you TS... take Kelce to Broome..

Oh yes and those who dont like the early Taylor country well.. what can we say.. the best way to see America is to simply follow the names of country songs.. Sammy Lovell ([Mr Kimberley](#)) did that..

That ok Raff...

