

# POP FLASH.



This is the album I was born to make, [says](#) Miley Cyrus of her latest, *Plastic Hearts*. Invoking that tiresome, clichéd phrase is what artists tend to do when their career is lagging — except, in the case of *Plastic Hearts*, it's actually true. It's not that Cyrus has been lagging, per se, it's more that she's been desperately searching, [casting about for a sense of self](#). And, like many a lost young person before her, she has finally found that center in the sweet embrace of rock and roll. *Plastic Hearts* is decidedly not a pop record, it doesn't even try to be, and perhaps for some fans, that transition won't take. Those fans can kindly kiss Miley's ass.

There have been so many iterations of Cyrus that it's easy to eye-roll when a new edition is unveiled. From the squeaky clean, tween Hannah Montana empire — which produced her three earliest, toothless albums — to the twerking *Bangerz* star pillaging rap for beats and weed, to the flailing, absurdist theatrics of *Dead Petz*, to the re-sanitized, hip-hop rejecting rainbowland of *Younger Now*, to the drugs-and-rap-are-good-actually posturing of last year's *She Is Coming EP*, Miley has worn out her welcome when it comes to reinvention. But she's rarely been the kind of star to let other people's opinions dictate her behavior.

Or, maybe this most recent pivot wouldn't be worth defending if Miley hadn't pulled it off so dang well. Will you accept a great rock album, even if it was made by a former pop star? Only a fool would look this gift horse in the mouth. *Plastic Hearts* is finally covering the ground listeners want to hear her speak on, with apologetic and reflective songs that no longer shirk topics like cheating, sex, and celebrity. Album opener "WTF Do I Know" sets the tone as an unapologetic divorce anthem anchored by a growling bassline, and even if the title track wastes perfect percussion, "Angels Like You" quickly shifts the blame back to herself for a *Joanne*-

indebted ballad that soars like “Wrecking Ball” once did.

— *Uproxx Pop Critic, Caitlin White on Miley Cyrus’ full-blown [transition to rock and roll](#).*

## NUMBER ONE STUNNERS



## BTS

BTS have broken plenty of records this year, but their most recent accomplishment might be the most exciting of the lot. With “Life Goes On,” the opening track off their new album, *BE*, the Korean boy band have officially become the first act to have a song that’s sung primarily in Korean land at the top spot. As the reigning No. 1 hit this week, “Life Goes On” is also one of the slower tempo songs to top the charts in 2020, proving that no matter what kind of music they make, BTS fans are on board.

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## BUBBLING UNDER



### KING PRINCESS

“Pain” is King Princess’ [self-proclaimed favorite song she’s ever written](#), and unlike the top song on the charts this week, it brings the tempo up. Though most of her debut album *Cheap Queen* was more downtempo, “Pain” has a jittery bassline and frenetic melody that mimics the uneasy chaos of falling in love, and all the pain it can potentially bring. It’s a great switch-up to hear Mikaela Strauss singing along to a totally different kind of sound, and proof that she’s still able to transform herself at any moment.

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Get yourself in the holiday spirit with this new Christmas album featuring songs by Trey Songz, Ty Dolla \$ign, Pink Sweat\$ & more. Listen [here](#).

## REMEMBER WHEN

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TAYLOR SWIFT!



While everyone is very familiar with Taylor Swift's birth year — it's 1989, in case you've been living under a rock — it's also important to acknowledge that in a few day she will be turning 31 years old, on December 13th. Maybe this is the birthday where she reveals to us that her and Joe Alwyn (boyfriend, lover, and [collaborator on \*Folklore\*](#), natch) actually have tied the knot?? Rumors love to swirl when it comes to Taylor. But given she produced one of the best albums of the year in 2020, all while quarantined, it's only right that we celebrate her birthday a few days early.

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## LOVE LETTERS



## MEGAN THEE STALLION

Sorry, Megan Thee Stallion is a rapper, but “Body” is pure pop bliss. Yes, she’s firmly in the hip-hop space due to the ferocious bars executed perfectly all over *Good News*, but Meg’s hit-making power can’t be denied, either. “Body” has the kind of nonsensical but nonetheless impossible to ignore hook that embeds itself deep in our brain’s pleasure center and twerks all over it. While Meg might’ve had a rough year when it comes to relationships, given that business with Tory Lanez and losing a friend along with it, the fire she brings on this official debut album is so hot you’d never know. And if you’re just getting into Megan, “Body” is a great place to start.

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