

Dear Music,

Every lyric, every word, every syllable.
Not one can describe how I have always empathized with you.
Out of all of the most beautiful, heart clenching love songs,
Not one can describe my love for you.

From the moment I opened my first physical CD,
Reputation from Taylor Swift,
I fell into a tunnel of tunes
And I don't regret a single thing.

A little 6-year-old,
Jumping around on my sister's bed with her.
We would scream every word.
We knew the melodies, tracklist and lyrics of the whole album.
It may have annoyed our parents, sure,
But we'd never felt more alive.

From '*...Ready For It*'
To '*New Year's Day*'
Every song meant something special.

Until I stopped.
I stopped listening to you.
At that time, you seemed like another one of life's little things to me.
Just another thing to occupy people.

Then, on one October afternoon,
My dad told me to go outside.
I sat on the swings and began to sing.
I really didn't know what,
Some old song I'd heard on the radio?
But the words flowed out of my mouth like a river.

And so, I made a playlist.
All of my favorite songs from my favorite people,
Mixed into a long, beautiful, 3 hours of melody.

After finding my favorites, I looked for other stuff.
Stuff I *hadn't* heard.
I found it.

This woman produced a bunch of you that really dug into me.
At first it was the melody,

The sound of her voice,
And then I read the lyrics.

And now, one year later
After seeing her in concert in June,
I've never been more grateful for what you've done for me, music.

Yes, we still have that *reputation* CD,
And we still play it all the time,
But I discovered more of you.
And after 6 years,
I still dance on my sister's bed.
I still know the whole album.
And I still annoy my parents with it.

Oddly enough, though,
Taylor Swift was honestly one of the people like you who helped me.
Eventually I came to my senses and began to listen to her works again.
So thank you, music,
For everything.

I wish you *All Too Well*,
Riley