

Lady Gaga, cereal killer



The Problem With ... Me

MY YEAR IN TAKE-BACKS.

About this time of year, I like to visit a Arundown diner called Reflet. It serves fancy French dishes like *corneille*, an entrée made of crow; *chapou*, made of my hat; and *creme de la mot*, a tart dessert made of my words.

BY

SHAHRYAR

RIZVI

I don't think this diner will show up in the Dish section anytime soon. I just go there to castigate myself for a few choices I made in my "The Problem With ..." and "In Defense of..." columns on our music blog.

You see, when I review an artist one single at a time, my vision tends to tunnel into those singles. I begin to think that the single represents all the artist is capable of, regardless of any good songs that don't become singles.

Here are a few bites from Reflet's three-course meal. *Bon appetit*.

Nicki Minaj is not the Highlander

This year, I heaped a bit of praise on Nicki Minaj for her debut, *Pink Friday*, and for being the most popular female emcee in hip-hop right now. This praise stems from my belief that the music industry only likes to promote one woman emcee at a time, to the detriment of the rest.

My coverage tends to ignore the fact that seasoned mic queens like Missy Elliott and Queen Latifah still have music careers. Also, indie emcees like Kid Sister and Azealia Banks are creeping up to take the mic alongside Nicki, not to bury her.

The less we talk about Fergie or Kreamy-shawn, though, the better.

Take Care sounded all right

Last year, I railed a bit on Drake. I basically thought he was coasting on the hype of his vain debut *Thank Me Later*, coupled with his fame from acting on *Degrassi: The Next Generation*. He didn't have to be good, he just had to be famous and a bit narcissistic.

His sophomore album *Take Care* had a consistent, artfully maudlin R&B theme. While Drake still strikes me as hollow and uninteresting, he now has a frame to build something interesting on.

I promised awhile ago that I'd thank Drake later when he improves. He's not great, but he has improved. So thanks, Drake.

I bought *Born This Way* on Amazon MP3

I'm one of the millions of listeners who bought Lady Gaga's *Born This Way* when it appeared on Amazon MP3 for 99 cents in May. I thought to myself, "Ninety-nine cents for an ignoble piece of music history and the opportunity to study Lady Gaga's tracks before they become singles? Count me in!"

Had I known my meager donation would contribute to the box of Cheerios in that pretentious "Marry the Night" video, I wouldn't have done it. I regret selling my soul for that low a price.

OK, LMFAO does suck

After hearing "Party Rock Anthem" for the 10,000th time, I think the time has come to take back my praise for LMFAO. I'll say that the duo was fun to watch live at Gexa Pavilion this past summer. One time, I even tossed talcum powder on the garage floor like LeBron and got my shuffle on with worn-out Chucks.

Of course, when I came down from the adrenaline rush, I realized the garage was cold and my shoes were slippery. I feel the same way looking back on my praise of LMFAO. The rush is over, dudes.



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