



PREMIERE: Best Ex and the spontaneity of 'Bad Love'

By **Murjani Rawls** - Nov 22, 2019

You never really have control when creativity hits you. A random memory may pop into your head and then it bleeds out onto lined pages or through musical notes. Some of the best songs may not take months of planning. In turn, they could take 30 minutes of formulating in your bedroom and not some big, gaudy studio. 'Bad Love,' the newest single from [Best Ex](#), the

project of Mariel Loveland is a change for her. It further develops the electronic sensibilities of her 2017 EP, *Ice Cream Anti Social*, but it pertains to how the song is being released.

'Bad Love' is the first song that Loveland has released as a single only. While the song's inspiration is out of a period where Loveland was feeling stagnant, it serves as a restart of the engine of her musical aspirations. We spoke about the origins of the song, the very cold and serendipitous day in when the video was shot, and how she's feeling since the two year period between projects has passed.

It's been two years since you released *Ice Cream Anti Social*. I wanted to ask a general question to start us off. How are things? How do you feel about Best Ex and just life in general?

I could be better. I feel like I always say that. The band is good, so it feels really good to be able to be back at it again, I'm starting to feel more normal, you know what I mean? I feel like there was a time in the last two years where I felt like my whole life was on pause. I was dating someone and I was waiting for him to move to America. I was essentially living part of the time with him in the UK and I was making this record very slowly.

It just felt like my entire life was just like waiting to happen again. I put everything on pause and I moved back home. I was living with my mom you know by choice just to kind of save up and wait. Now, I'm finally getting back to living my life instead of like waiting for it to happen. That feels pretty good.

You've stated that Candy Hearts used to be a big source of anxiety for you. With Best Ex and listening to the EP, I definitely think it encompasses who Mariel is. 'Bad Love' is even more in the electronic realm. I know the song came very organically for you. You've never released a lone single before. How did this new fit of inspiration come about?

Yeah, I've never released a straight single before. I think a lot of the reason why that is partly that there's like residual anxiety of Candy Hearts. Every move I made, my whole team and it seemed like it was like life or death. Everything we do is so big. There was never like just a single. There was always just like a single attached to a huge album that we spent years working on. It does feel life or death when it's something you've worked on forever. It's such a massive body of work.

I feel like the music industry has changed a lot since those days where you put all this pressure on yourself to release a full-length album. Or even stick to traditional album cycles. Now, it's

unnecessary pressure. A lot of artists just release singles and EPs now. It's like you're the architect of your own misery. You're just like putting all this unnecessary pressure on yourself which is a habit I feel like a lot of people my age have.

With "Bad Love," that love, it just sort of happened. It felt right to just like release it as a single. It will be part of something greater, definitely and was one of those songs that I just wrote it in my bedroom in 30 minutes. The way that I wanted it to sound was immediately in my head. I kinda told my producer how I wanted it to sound. When I showed up and he laid down his ideas he had before I got there and it was exactly how I wanted the song to be. I was like, "how the heck did you just jump inside my head when I didn't even tell you yet?"

You touched on the music industry-changing. The Grammys just nominated an EP for the album of the year category. The landscape has definitely shifted to more frequent releases. Do you prefer to like release just EPs over albums, or do you still like the album experience?

I think based on practicality and finances as an artist who funds everything completely herself, it's easier to do an EP. It has the same effect because it's obviously cheaper with fewer songs. It serves the same purpose if you're looking at it in terms of things you can promote online and social media or whatever, but it feels gross to look at things that way.

I really do feel sad thinking about a music industry where albums don't matter. When an artist I love after two years comes out of like nowhere again and releases an album, it feels so special. You get to listen to it and sit with it for a while. I feel like that's lost with an EP. Instead of waiting two years to release an album, people will release EP is like every year. So, it's the same amount of work it's just like a different time frame. It just feels a little bit less special to me, I gotta be honest. Even though that is probably what I'm going to do.

'Bad Love' basically draws some the same experiences and person that you wrote about in 'Brooklyn Bridge.' I wonder if it's hard on you to draw from those older experiences? Does it reopen wounds or does it put things in its proper place?

I think the moment that I wrote that song, I was feeling really bored. Like I was saying, I felt like my life was on hold and nothing interesting was happening. So, it wasn't really difficult for me to think back to times where my life really was interesting and exciting. Which usually comes from a place that's either really, really good or really, really bad. Never just fine.

So, it is an interesting place to draw from when it's a very hectic place, but it wasn't really hard for me to think back. I have like a good memory when it comes to how I feel about something, but not necessarily exactly what happened. When it comes to channeling emotions that I felt before, I think that is a skill that I have. Probably to a detriment because remembering feelings and not remembering all the facts is not great in an argument.

There are some lyrics that stuck out to me. "*I am broken like the lights/That sneak in through your blinds/And bury you at night/I will surprise you.*" It's a really particular image you painted.

I was thinking of this person's bedroom. We lived in New York City and his old bedroom where he used to live had like these blinds that he never really closed them all the way. The light from the street would like always come through right onto his bed when we were sleeping. It was a very vivid memory I have of his apartment.

I always felt like throughout the earlier parts of me knowing him he did underestimate me. He even admitted to underestimating me and thought that I was a little bit dumb and dizzy. Until he started reading things I wrote on and listening to the art that I made. I always felt when I first got to know him that he just kind of wrote me off as kind of an idiot. I also knew that I wasn't and he was just incorrect. So, that's where it came from. I was thinking about how it's so dark. You don't expect that light to be coming in through the night and be something that can keep you awake.

You filmed the video on a super cold day in the UK. You even mentioned that it started snowing. how was that experience?

That was a really great day. It was really cold, but sometimes you have to suck it up for like your art. And I was the one who chose to film and mark you know, which is like the coldest month ever. And I did think it was kind of funny that it just randomly snow there and like the whole country was like, freaking out about how it never snows.

I remember waking up and seeing just a blanket of snow outside the window in London. It was so beautiful and special because it doesn't happen there very often at all. The fact that it started during our music video, I felt like the stars kind of aligned. That's the perfect thing that could

have happened to make our music video go into channeling the emotion of being in an icy relationship that's like not good for you, you know?

We filmed at this place in London called God's Own Junkyard which is a company that makes neon signs. They also have a showroom that they let people walk around which is insane. Although they've done Vogue shoots there, you really can't bring cameras. We had to covertly film with an iPhone for the scenes that were shot in there. I think somehow blended in really well. We were trying to pretend that we weren't filming a music video in there because you don't want to get in trouble. However, it definitely looked like we were filming a music video.

Watch the new video for 'Bad Love.'

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