



PLEASER



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SOME OF MY EARLIEST MUSICAL memories involve my mom driving me and my sister to pre-school. During the drive, there would be a wide variety of songs that played over the radio and on the CDs. The songs my mom would pay special attention to, like country blues artist Bonnie Raitt or anything from U2's *Joshua Tree* album, continue to be the ones I remember the most clearly.

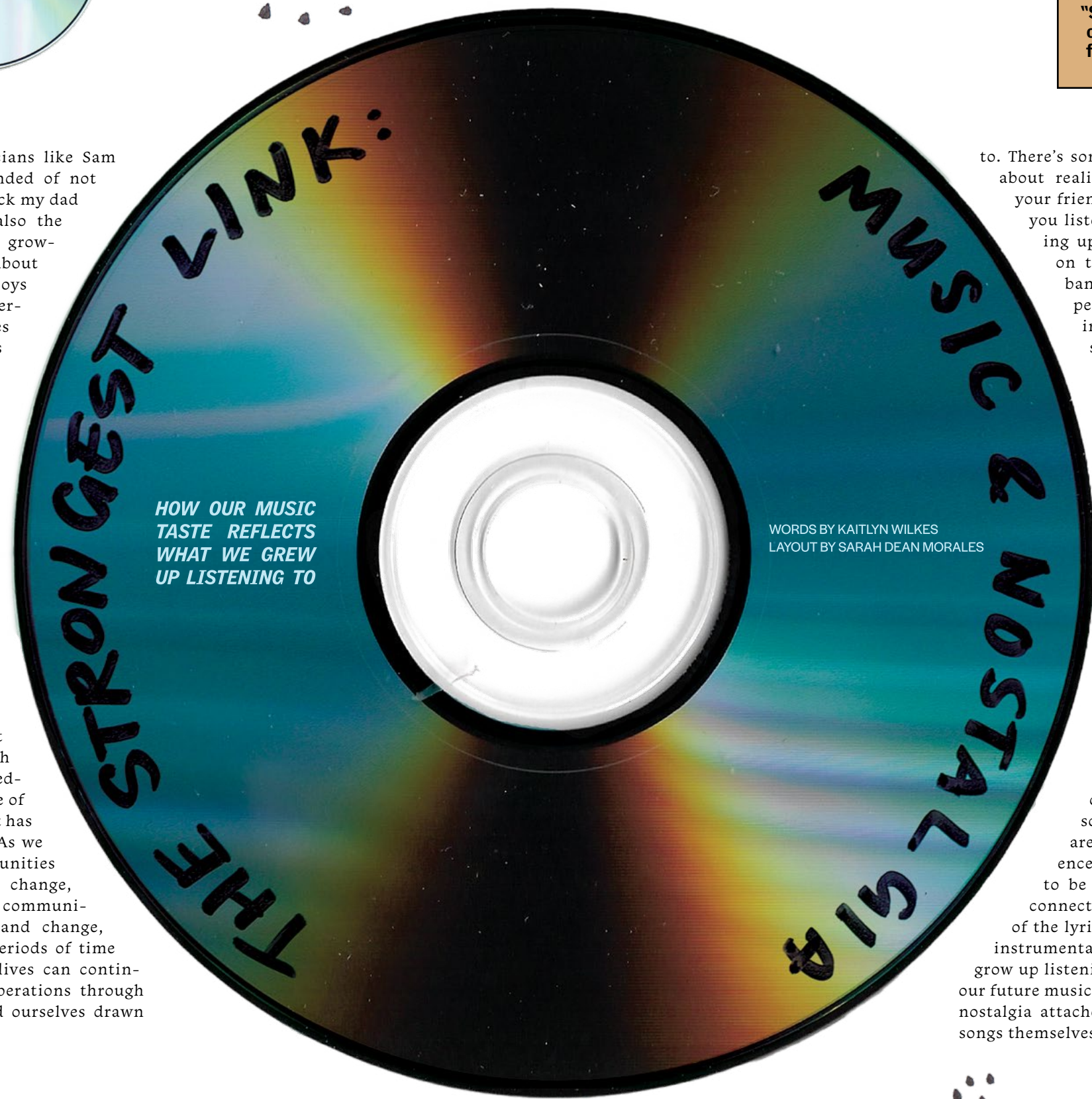
When my dad started driving the two of us to school, he became familiar with Radio Disney, and we became familiar with Houston's alt-rock station 94.5 The Buzz. Nirvana, Foo Fighters, Creed, Beck and everything in between found its way through the airwaves and into my ears.

Now, many years later, my music taste is a product of the music I grew up listening to, from my parents who still argue that Gen X has the best music, to my friends who listened to One Direction, Taylor Swift and Selena Gomez like me.

When I listen to Kacey Musgraves, I'm reminded of the country music that I grew up listening to living in the American South, from the storytelling to the ability to create heart-wrenching lyrics accompanied by sliding guitars. Bands like The 1975 remind me of the 1980s pop I would hear on the radio or John Hughes movies my mom insisted

I watch. In musicians like Sam Fender, I'm reminded of not only the British rock my dad listened to, but also the complexities of growing up, learning about yourself and the joys and struggles of certain communities seen in albums like *Joshua Tree*. In artists like Taylor Swift or 5 Seconds of Summer, I see my friends, singing along in the car, trying to convince our parents to let us go see them in concert when they came to town.

Where there is music, there is community. The communities that we create through music can be incredibly strong because of the impact that art has on people's lives. As we grow, our communities might shift and change, but the and our communities might shift and change, the impact that periods of time can have on our lives can continue to make reverberations through the music we find ourselves drawn



to. There's something comforting about realizing that you and your friend's dads both made you listen to alt-rock growing up and educated you on the ins and outs of band drama that bonds people together. You immediately know some of the same songs and you can get a sense of the direction their music taste has taken. For example, the music we grow up listening to is our first introduction to what music is, what it can be and the diversity of music that is available to us. Seeing our parents express their love for songs or hearing the same songs over and over are our first experiences of what it means to be a fan. Whether we connect with music because of the lyrics or because of the instrumentals, the tunes we grow up listening to can influence our future music taste because of the nostalgia attached to the genres or songs themselves.

Because my parents showed my sister and I a lot of music growing up, we can immediately tell if I'm listening to a new up-and-comer our parents would also like. My sister and I can also refer to musicians we've grown up listening to by their first names and my parents know who we're talking about—like they're a childhood friend.

Much like reconnecting with a childhood friend you've lost touch with, having friends who still listen to artists you used to listen to as a kid may help fold you back into a musician's fansbase. Having someone you care about talk about a musician they love may remind you of how you also loved that artist as a child, and through the power of nostalgia and curiosity, you find yourself listening to new releases.

Now, after starting my own journey as an adult, when I get homesick, when things get hard or when I want to listen to one of the best albums of all time (whether this is my own opinion or brainwashing from my mom remains to be seen), I can pull out my 1980s pressing of *Joshua Tree* and put it on the record player. In that moment, I am transported back to Houston, sitting in the back seat of the car, waiting for the light to change.

