



## The features team reviews ‘The Tortured Poets Department’

BY: FEATURES TEAM / ON: APRIL 21, 2024 / IN: FEATURES, MUSIC

Taylor Swift’s new album, “The Tortured Poets Department,” dropped April 19. Like everything else Swift does, the album has polarized audiences since its release. The Scribe’s features team isn’t immune to Swift’s influence, and we found ourselves in opposition.

For our first ever quadruple review, here’s what the four features writers thought about the new release.

### Ella’s Review

5 out of 5 stars

I heard “Teardrops on my Guitar” when I was five years old, and I’ve been a die-hard Swiftie since. I went to the Eras Tour last summer, and Taylor Swift album releases are a big deal for me.

Listening to a new album for the first time always feels so familiar yet unlike any album she’s put out before. “The Tortured Poets Department” is sad synth-pop, a perfect mix of the advanced lyricism of “folklore” and “evermore” with a sound similar to “reputation” and “Midnights.”

People love to criticize Swift for only writing breakup songs, which I don’t think is true at all. This, however, is a breakup album, and a damn good one.

The opening vocals of “So Long, London” sound like church bells, perfectly fitting the mournful lyrics of a wrecked relationship. Swift notoriously chooses the saddest song on the album to be track five, and “So Long, London” earned its place with lyrics like, “You swore that you loved me, but where were the clues? I died on the altar waiting for the proof.”

In “But Daddy, I Love Him” Swift pokes fun at the constant lies spun by the media, singing “But Daddy, I love him! I’m having his baby. No, I’m not, but you should see your faces.”

Swift continues to prove that she is the queen of pop. In “Who’s Afraid of Little Old Me” she even sings, “Put narcotics into all of my songs, and that’s why you’re still singing along.”

### Olivia’s Review

2 out of 5 stars

I want to preface by saying I’m not a Swift hater, but I’m not a lover either. I think the last album I was excited about was “Speak Now.” My first concert was the “Fearless” tour, and I appreciate how her work inspires and resonates with others. I’m not an avid fan, but I feel like I’m always holding out for Swift to surprise me with something I love.

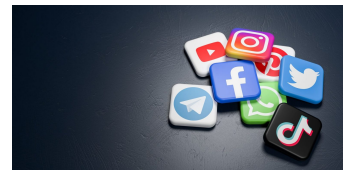
### FOLLOW



### LATEST STORIES



SPORTS OPINION | Everyone should get hooked on pickleball



OPINION | Regulating social media on the consumer end won’t solve any problems



Nontraditional students and summer plans



SGA summary: a year of bills passed to support students



Ms. Informed: Last column of spring 2024

That said, “The Tortured Poets Department” did not do that for me.

Beginning with the name, I had high hopes for some references to great poets, or even lyrical influence from works that inspire Swift. The absence of which was a major missing piece. The production was repetitive, and the lyrics felt...typical.

I found some satisfaction throughout the album, I loved the Florence + The Machine feature on “Florida!!!,” the ethereal flair to “So Long, London” and the religious undertones of “Guilty as Sin?” “Who’s Afraid of Little Old Me?” felt fresh, with Swift acknowledging her character in the public eye.

Since Swift’s first rerecording dropped in 2021, I’ve been waiting for her to grow up. I don’t think there’s any shame in writing music about past love affairs, that’s what half the songs in the world are about! However, her lyrics land as immature. There were times the album seemed to pander, using slang from the internet in a way that felt inauthentic. I’m still waiting for Swift to get real and stop playing it safe.

### **Kaylie’s Review**

0.5 out of 5 stars

As the resident Swift hater, I’m here to be the voice of reason. The last time I appreciated Swift’s music was sixth grade; “1989” rocked my entire world. Then I went emo, I started listening to Cash Money prodigies and can no longer stand Swift’s music.

“Fortnight” had me worried I would have to change my mind about Swift’s unbearable music, but then I realized I only liked the Lana Del Rey vibes and the fact that Post Malone carried the entire thing. The rest of the album has the same too breathy, nearing voice-crack vocals that Swift always provides, and I wonder why her fans aren’t bored yet. Her lyrics are the same stories she told in her country days, just in a Victoria’s Secret pajama set.

I’m waiting for her to stop singing about boys who are mean to her. Old heartbreak can make for a good song, sure, but “Now I’m down bad, crying at the gym, everything comes out teenage petulance. F— it if I can’t have him” has the same energy as a high schooler who’s hung up on her first love. Just move on already.

If you like listening to the same song on repeat for over an hour, this album is perfect for you. For those who enjoy musical diversity, this album is better on mute.

### **Livi’s Review**

3 out of 5 stars

I wouldn’t call myself the biggest Swiftie, but I did spend last summer watching TikTok livestreams of the Eras Tour. I enjoy most of Swift’s music from “reputation” onwards, and I will admit she was my most listened to artist last year. Swift’s lyrics feel like she took my hypothetical diaries and made them into songs. Maybe I should reconsider my statement of not being a Swiftie.

The title “The Tortured Poets Department” led me on. I thought Swift would embrace poetic lyrics like the ones in my on-repeat favorite albums of hers, “folklore” and “evermore.”

Swift’s albums usually take time to grow on me, so there’s a chance my ranking could change. The first eight songs of TTPD are interesting and each have a distinct style and heartfelt lyrics. The album probably would have survived without the last eight tracks.

My favorite tracks at the moment are, “My Boy Only Breaks His Favorite Toys,” “But Daddy, I Love Him,” and “Florida!!! (feat. Florence + The Machine).”

“My Boy Only Breaks His Favorite Toys” has an interesting melody that makes you want to keep repeating it. The lyrics reference agonizing moments in a tragic relationship. When Swift goes from singing, “I’m queen of sandcastles he destroys,” to “once I fix me, he’s gonna miss me,” this really sells the song as a heartbreak anthem.

“But Daddy, I Love Him” sounds like a classic older Swift song, and I mean that in a good way. It’s almost like a grown-up version of “Love Story,” where Swift references Romeo and Juliet.

Many of the songs are reminiscent of styles from past albums. For instance, “Who’s Afraid of Little Old Me?” reminds me of the sass and fun lyrics of “1989.”

In “Florida!!! (feat. Florence + The Machine),” the two singers’ mezzo-soprano voices blend well with Florence’s sultry English tone and Swift’s American soft melodic pop. Plus, it’s a great song to blast in the car.

With my background in audio engineering, I find the ear-candy throughout the album the best part. “Down Bad,” is littered with ‘80s style pianos and synths, which made me smile despite the shallow lyrics.



**A hammocker’s guide to Colorado Springs**

Overall, this album is like a mix of the whole Eras Tour soundtrack that details Swift's highs and lows from the past few years.

*Photo by Beth Garrabrant/TTPD.*

---

Previous Post: [SCRIBBLE | Mountain Lion starts taking classes, does better than human students](#)

Next Post: [UCCS celebrates new engineering building after experiencing delays](#)

---

Scribe@uccs.edu

University Center Room 106  
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

[About Us](#)

*Designed using Magazine News Byte Premium. Powered by WordPress.*