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Controversial Collabs and More Lana Del Rey: An Updated Midnights Review

Natalie Schorr, Social Media Manager

This past fall I reviewed Taylor Swift's newest album "Midnights" upon release. While I was not wowed at the time, I must admit that some of the songs have grown on me since. In the review, I specifically called out the lackluster inclusion of Lana Del Rey on the track "Snow On The Beach." Needless to say, I was delighted when Swift announced that she would be re-releasing the song with more Del Rey vocals as a part of her "Midnights (Til Dawn Edition)." With this brand new release, I felt it would be appropriate to revisit my old review and discuss the revisions that Swift has made and the controversy surrounding the new album.



Natalie Schorr

Along with the original 13 tracks of the album, "Midnights (Til Dawn Edition)" includes most of the 3 a.m. tracks, the aforementioned "Snow On The Beach (Feat. More Lana Del Rey)," "Hits Different," which was originally only available on a Target exclusive CD and a remix of "Karma" featuring Ice Spice. With this release, Ice Spice will be the first woman of color to be featured on one of Swift's songs.

With the news around the recent start of Swift's tour, some fans believe that this release could have been a PR move by the artist. After a reported split with Swift's longtime partner Joe Alwyn, there have been rumors circulating that the singer is now dating Matty Healy of The 1975. Healy has always been a divisive figure, and most recently, he received major backlash for an appearance he made on the podcast "The Adam Friedland Show." During the podcast recording, Healy made racist comments about Ice Spice among other insensitive jokes. He later apologized for his actions, but many remain unconvinced that Healy will change his behavior.

Fans of Swift have been up in arms after hearing that the artist is reportedly dating Healy. Some have taken to Twitter to convince Swift to break up with him or have stated that they are canceling their pre-orders for Swift's upcoming re-release of "Speak Now." Swift's choice to release a remix of one of her songs with a feature from an artist who was recently embroiled in controversy with her rumored boyfriend is a move that has fans perplexed. Swift stated that Ice Spice was the one to approach her about the remix, but many still wonder if there were ulterior motives on the artist's part.

While we may never know exactly why Swift chose to release these songs now, we might as well listen to them to decide if it was worth it or not. So for now, here's my review.

Hits Different

I had only heard snippets of this song before its official release to streaming platforms. I was a huge fan of what I heard, so I was excited to be able to listen to the song in full. I am glad to say that I was rightly excited because "Hits Different" has quickly become one of my favorite songs. It has a fun and upbeat vibe that takes you back to Swift's sound before her last two albums: "Folklore" and "Evermore." This song will for sure be on repeat for me in the near future, and I think it's the perfect song to add to any summer playlist.

Snow On The Beach (Feat. More Lana Del Rey)

All I can say is WOW! This is what the song should have been originally! Del Rey takes her verses and makes them entirely her own and gives the track a completely different feeling than the original. Listening to it now, I can't imagine why Swift decided not to utilize Del Rey's vocals more in the first place. It has taken a song that used to be pretty low in my "Midnights" ranking to a new favorite of the album for me. While this one is not upbeat enough to make it onto my summer playlist, I will be coming back for more listens.

Karma (feat. Ice Spice)

I... don't know how I feel about this one. The choice to cut the time of Ice Spice's verse makes it feel awkward, stilted and almost like it doesn't belong to the same song. Additionally, Ice Spice's ad libs throughout the song, while fun, don't fit in well in my opinion. This collaboration had so much potential, and I still want to understand why they decided to make Ice Spice's vocals so slow. It doesn't fit the song, and it doesn't fit her musical style.

Overall, these tracks were more positive than negative for me. While I probably won't be re-listening to the new "Karma" remix, "Hits Different" and "Snow On The Beach (Feat. More Lana Del Rey)" are new favorites that I will be revisiting and that have spots on my favorite Taylor Swift song's playlist.