

# We Plug to You... Miki Vale – The Good The Bad & The Lovely EP

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Here is **Miki Vale** from San Diego. That may not have inspired you to read on and I don't blame you, time is sparse, and there are so many distractions. But take a time-out from multitasking and focus on Miki. She deserves your whole attention.

She is a gem to stumble across. Hard to place in just one category, and I am reluctant to do so. She mixes Hip-Hop with Soul and produces carefully crafted pieces of honesty. She has learned her trade, as Drake would say, starting from the bottom, as a music writer to a promoter and mingling with everyone along the way, including the likes of **Georgia Anne Muldrow**, **Oddisee** and her own brother **Dudley Perkins** aka **Declaime**.

Vale – pronounced Vayl according to her Facebook page – is a refreshing ray of light in an area that can feel like a boys club. It's the combination of the brilliant lyrics balanced with gorgeous melodies which makes me shy away from defining her as anything but an artist. She might rap but it is so effortlessly harmonious that you almost forget; it is just refreshingly sultry.

*The Good The Bad and The Lovely* is her new EP with unfortunately just five tracks. Usually when I'm told about a new track I prefer it to be with the fewest words possible because words alter your expectation. So here are mine: it is honest and witty lyrics over soulful music. When you listen to them again, and I know that you will, they only get better. Vale hasn't just created music, it is a story, and should be listened to as one. This love story is "*music to break up and make up to*" as she summed up perfectly.

Starting off with "**Taurus**", which is just spoken word over a great Seventies inspiring tune, she sets the empowering tone of the entire EP – it is a bold statement. "**The Next**" is the beginning of love, full of the tingling excitement that comes with it, carried through the light summery vibe, backed by sparse drums, piercing keys, interjecting horn arrangements and hand claps. Vale's lyrics are spoken with care; she takes her time knowing she has your attention, so she is in no rush. It brings with it a raw vulnerability. Her style is distinct and heavily sultry; it is music that can reach everybody.

The third track "**Special Way**", featuring **Rachel Evans**, is where we are head over heels in love. Clear through Evans' smooth vocals and the slowly plucked guitar strings, Vale's lyrical ability is attributed to her love of poetry that she developed since her youth and it shows. "**Worth it**" is definitely my favorite song on *The Good The Bad & The Lovely*. Things have gone wrong and it is time to save or split. The tempo has changed and it builds slowly. Vale's lyrics entwine a baffling underlying anger and a healthy dose of self-worth, delivering us through those exhausting relationships that disintegrate against our hopes.

In the middle of shaking your head along you'll find yourself cracking into a wide grin or even LOL-ing (sorry I couldn't resist) as she catches you off guard after lulling you with her rhymes. My favorite line had to be "*relationships are optional, I ain't holding you here, you are not a hostage yo*" followed closely by "*go ahead and take the dog to, I don't need that bitch either*".

The fLako-produced "**Love**" – which closes out the EP – starts off broken and jagged, there is a post-apocalyptic feel; it doesn't fit perfectly and the spontaneous abruptness musically reflects all the anger that has spilled out, Vale does it brilliantly.

Don't be fooled by this EP's laidback rhythm, it is achingly honest, without the need for profanity or hype. In just five sweet songs, **Miki Vale** has created a journey through relationships, enjoy the ride. I know I will be keeping tabs in anticipation on her next creation.

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