

The Lores of *Folklore*

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We have all watched Taylor Swift grow from a 15-year-old country singer to a pop icon with the release of *Red*. Backed up by heavy electronic music, she delved into a darker persona in the wake of the mass public scrutiny during her *Reputation* era. Finally, she sobered down and grew into a sparkling pop princess in *Lover*.

There had always been arguments and disagreements over which one of her personas and albums brought out the best of her to us, musically. And, although her stark transition from *Reputation* to *Lover* had been surprising for all of us, it did not catch us as off guard as her latest 2020 release.

On June 23, Taylor Swift announced the release of *Folklore* and in less than 24 hours, she rolled out the album for the public to devour.

Folklore is unlike her previous releases in more than one ways. For one, the swift drop with no prior promotions and teasers contrasts her musical career so far, or at least since *Red* when social media promotions had taken off. Taylor Swift has had her own style of promoting her albums with months of teasers and Easter eggs hidden in all her media appearances. Compared to all of that when we look at *Folklore* and its release, it seems more raw and intimate.

In *Folklore* she has left behind the glam and glitter and even the album art seems like a grainy image collected from the hazy memory lanes of a person; which is exactly what the album itself is. There are no "singles" and no songs specially formulated with catchy hooks to be stuck in our minds and to be played on the speakers of every mall outlet in a loop. But, even then you will be coming



back for more because this time, instead of the catchy hooks, it will be the stories that will be stuck with you.

The whole album is a collection of indie-pop ballads with her vocals and storytelling taking centre-stage this time away from all the musical processing of her usual pop music. However, what sets this album apart from the rest is the sincerity behind her voice this time. In the past she seemed to have struggled to find her place in music and the flashy radio-friendly hits have been put down by fans

on many occasions. She always seemed to have sung for her fans and wrote songs trying to appease them.

So, what is this album trying to do? This time around, she has found her own voice. She is pouring her imagination onto paper and she is writing these stories solely for herself. Then later on, as if an afterthought, she shares her creation with the public.

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A Quick Quiz

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What kind of bread are you? Which Hogwarts house do you belong to? Who is your celebrity lookalike?

If these questions ring a bell in your head, congratulations, you have fallen down a rabbit hole to the quirky and outlandish world of online quizzes.

We humans are strikingly similar yet unique in our own ways. Inherently, most people like to know about themselves. A Harvard study shows that people indulge in talking about themselves almost 40 percent of the time. They get a natural high from self-disclosure. Narcissists, although notoriously known to come off as condescending, are well present in all of us to some extent. Taking a quiz serves both of these purposes. People like to categorise themselves and online quizzes are a gateway for self-exposure. It gives us information about the deepest, darkest personality traits and helps us come to terms with our attributes in a rather enjoyable manner. They are interactive and a guaranteed conversation starter. Quizzes are a great way of self-assessment and putting yourself out to others without sounding smug.

Quizzes have been around for ages. Newspaper quizzes were the highlight of the day for many in the past. This feature has been made more accessible to us with the aid of a little "Share" button. Maga-

What Kind Of Pasta Are You?

What's your inner noodle?

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BuzzFeed Staff

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zines like *Seventeen*, *Vogue* etc. used to have a quiz section on their back covers which later gained online traction. Quizzing has been an effective way of knowledge

retention and evaluation for decades. TV shows like *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* and *Jeopardy!* have gained popularity over the years along with apps and sites like

QuizUp, Mentalfloss, Zimbio and many more.

You might have come across gleeful posts by your friends about an app telling them that they look like Ryan Reynolds. Maybe you also had the urge to test which celebrity you look like. Trust me, we've all been there. This is the power of shareable content. Quizzes are an effective and engaging marketing tool. It's compelling and irresistible nature helps companies lure consumers into their content. BuzzFeed earns 75 percent of their overall website traffic from their quizzes. Many companies use quizzes to help build personalised subscription boxes to cater to their customers.

Although the results of most online quizzes are not scientifically backed up they do provide some insights about individual choices and characteristics. Apart from these there are a few other personality tests which yield somewhat accurate results. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test, Rorschach test or Inkblot test, Alignment test and The Sorting Hat Quiz are a few worth mentioning.

No matter what your reasoning might be, it's never a bad thing to take a quiz. So go on and find out which Pokémon you are.

Farnaz Fawad Hasan wants to go skydiving. Send her more stuff to add to her bucket list at farnazfawadhasan@gmail.com