

Sometimes it snows in April.
Sometimes I feel so bad, so bad.
Sometimes I wish life was never ending,
And all good things, they say, never last.
“Sometimes It Snows in April,” Prince

April 22, 2016

I had to make a difficult call yesterday. I had to call my mother and tell her that Prince had died. At 1:13PM, various inboxes became flooded with frantic messages from both my closest friends and also people I hadn't spoken with in years. The first I opened was, thankfully, from my college roommate, soul mate, and someone with whom I've cried while listening to “Purple Rain” on more than one occasion. She was the best person to break the news to me that one of my icons had passed away. I was speechless, and yet, I had to call my mom.

She was crushed. Incredulity quickly gave way to profound sadness. It killed me to hear her. “He wasn't even 60!” she said, still in disbelief. “He was still making music; he had so much more to give us,” she said. Her sincerity made me feel like the acknowledgment of these facts aloud (Prince's age, his still prolific artistry, etc.) would somehow be enough to bring him back. The universe would say, “Oh, right. My bad.” Exasperated, I heard my mom take in a breath and yell, “Fuck!” Again, “Fuck!” There really wasn't anything else to say.

I didn't spend too much time reading reactions to his death. The tributes I did see were touching, but all I wanted to do was listen to some records. I went with *The Gold Experience*. The album wasn't his most commercially successful, but it's always been a favorite of mine. His seventeenth studio album, *The Gold Experience* came out in 1995 amidst a contract dispute between Prince and Warner Bros. Records. He had subsequently changed his name to the unpronounceable “love” symbol. The album is eclectic, funky, beautiful, and sexy... really sexy. This is to say that the album was quintessentially Prince (or, ♪). I have fond memories of dancing to “P Control” at college parties (after my friend hijacked the stereo, of course), and I'll never forget my excitement during “Shhh,” a favorite, when I saw him live in 2004. I was convinced that he was playing it for me, but that's Prince. He made you feel like the only one in the room, or concert hall.

I'm always appreciative of my parents for making music a priority in my life, never more than when a legend, who I was lucky enough to see in concert, passes away. The last time this happened was too recent. David Bowie? That one hurt, universe.

Like I said, most of the reactions to Prince's death that I read online were sincere and beautiful (special recognition should go to *The Onion*). However, I was shocked at the number of comments expressing a cold indifference. Now, I understand that not everyone is a Prince fan, especially in the deep way that I am (I had a “lucky” Prince t-shirt in high school, and my ballet instructor used to yell at me for attempting to work the “Prince split” into her choreography), but confessing that one “never feels bad when celebrities die,” as one person did, seems unnecessary, sad, and downright insulting. The nerve of referring to Prince as a “celebrity”!

Prince was not my family member. I won't mourn him as such. However, I will take the time to be grateful. Prince's music shaped my personality, tastes, and ethics in immeasurable ways. I feel bad for anyone that has never been touched by art in this way. Only a month ago, back in my hometown for a short weekend visit, my mother and I sat on the couch together, watched *Purple Rain* and cried. Prince was someone whose art made me closer to the people that I love. If that isn't something to mourn, I don't know what is.

Gina