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## **Video Premiere: Bailey Bryan's Sultry Country Cover of Drake's 'Too Good'**



"Too Good" is the name of a hit single last year from Drake and Rihanna, and it also serves as an effective description of a new cover version recorded by a rising country singer, Bailey Bryan — see Variety's video premiere of the Nashville-based upstart's acoustic interpretation of the hip-hop hit below.

"I am definitely a huge Drake fan," says Bryan, 19, who was raised in the state of Washington before moving to Music City. "Drake, J. Cole, Kendrick Lamar — that's what I listen to a lot of the time to get inspiration for my own music, because it's another genre where really honest storytelling is possible, and welcomed if you do it the right way. I love the idea of bringing those two worlds that have shaped me as an artist, country and hip-hop, artist into one song."

She was on tour opening for country duo Dan + Shay this year when she began playing around with the idea of covering the tune, which she performs alone, live, as she does in the video, with her band leaving the stage.

"I really admire the melody and the phrasing of that song," Bryan says. "I also think that the lyrics of that song actually are so powerful and so emotional. I wanted to strip it down and bring attention to that, because that's what I admire most. I just kind of figured out these chords in a way that I liked one day and I played my version of the song for some people on my team, but I didn't think they were going to want me to do it, because I've played for exclusively country audiences so far. But they were like, 'This feels like you. You should do it.' The band walked off stage and it was just me and my guitar, and it's a vulnerable moment alone with a song that I don't know if the audience is going to know it. I wasn't sure how it would go over, but now it's become a really cool part of my identity as a live performer." The video has snippets of Bryan playing outside a convenience store, a nod to the high school days when she would busk outside a taco shop in Sequim, Washington, rather

than take her parents up on their suggestion to get a real job. But most of the clip takes place inside the shop in downtown Nashville, which she and her videographer spontaneously took over when they were wandering around looking for a location.

“We all saw this bodega/gas station market and we were like: Is it too weird?” she recalls. “I think it’s kind of perfect. I’ve spent a lot of time in these types of stores, living my life on the road over the last year. It’s weird, but it kind of makes sense. We had to stop filming every time somebody came in because they needed to grab their orange juice or their cigarettes from where I was standing.”

The hip-hop connection seems like less of a leap when you consider Bryan’s label home. She was signed last year in a joint deal between Warner Nashville and 300 Entertainment, the New York-based indie co-founded by Lyor Cohen, which has her as the only country act on a roster better known for acts like Fetty Wap. Her debut recording, the EP “So Far,” was released in the spring.