

Gotta Be Mandi: Alternative rocker Mandi Crimmins explores self-acceptance with new song “Anyone But Me”



If you've never met Mandi Crimmins, you wouldn't know how iconic her deep scarlet locks are in her grunge-but-trendy aesthetic. That's why in the video to her recent release, "Anyone But Me," viewers initially see only brief flashes of her "alter ego" alongside the blonde, preppy version of herself that, in reality, couldn't be any more opposite.

"I'd change me if I could / if it could help" is the main hook of this dynamic song, all about managing the delicate balance of who you are with what you feel like others want you to be.

I am not only a huge fan of Mandi's particular brand of angsty punk rock heavily influenced by Amy Lee of Evanescence, but also her bravery and honesty. It takes major guts to bare all of that in a song for countless listeners to hear (and she has so many, with an impressive following on Tik Tok @mandicrimminsmusic of 35,000 and growing). Musically, she's an expert at crafting melodies with impressive replay value, constantly hitting all the right notes. As she delves deep into the odd in-between of being a full-grown emo kid, followers from all walks of life who have an alternative aesthetic will feel perfectly at home in her music.

"Anyone But Me" seeks to calm the stresses and insecurities that exist in a world that snuffs out all individuality. It's tempting to hide your true personality and style just to fit in to the adult world of success that's driven by everything beige and boring. But what Mandi beautifully embodies is how fulfilling it is to embrace exactly who you are without hesitation. Confidence is what sets you apart from the crowd, no matter how you like to dress.

"Every mistake / every thought I can't shake / keeps me awake" is a very accurate depiction of anxiety and the unfortunate way it often comes on full-force while trying to rest. Mandi's dramatic glances into a fractured mirror offer a tangible feeling of what it is to be missing pieces of yourself, or not recognizing the person in the mirror looking back at you.

Then halfway through the song, she starts to transform by trying on an edgier outfit, but the blonde hair and delicate makeup remain - a stagnant reminder of her need to branch out even more. The concept isn't complicated, but the best things often aren't. A simple idea executed artfully and with distinct intention often fares a lot better than the flashier ideas that have way too much going on to be impactful. This video perfectly encapsulates the heart of the song, effectively fleshing it out into a gorgeous visual of the warring personas that somehow exist simultaneously in all of us.

Musically, this song is built on a typical pop progression and beat with a driving bass, but the most sparkling moments happen in the bridge section. True to her signature artistic voice, Mandi loves using musical pivot points to modulate to a new key - even just for a single note - elevating the most poignant moments of her songs. In "Anyone But Me," the entire bridge is modulated up, which brings the listener to a whole new place before returning to the original key for the final chorus and outro. Listen to the glittering power move that is this bridge section, layered against the narrative moment when Mandi finally embraces her true self.

Parallel moments from this concept video include a prim and proper Mandi sipping from a dainty teacup (which she didn't initially know how to drink from properly - that's how punk rock she is) compared to her chugging down a skull-shaped clear mug filled with black coffee. As the viewer is introduced to a very demure and sweet-looking Mandi, you see quick flashes of the real Mandi (but don't blink, or you'll miss it).

It's not until the utterly delectable key modulation in the bridge that the real Mandi is here to stay, with only a final, brief flashback to her blonde-haired alter ego. Gone are the pastel hues and the pink headband. In their place are combat boots, leather pants and a trendy beanie. The radiant smile on Mandi's face proves she's never felt better - and for a good reason! Being shamelessly and unapologetically yourself is always a good look - and she rocks it effortlessly.

Watch Mandi Crimmins' new music video *HERE*: youtube.com/watch?v=kAoBFFRs59A and stream her music on Spotify *HERE*: open.spotify.com/artist/7lAYNCc413YgXmGxpEj8NN?si=OiikWdD7Sd-VpsjedjsslQ