



### The Elected “**Me First**” Sub Pop Records

In over three years of publication Folkwax has severely stretched the boundaries of what can be deemed *folk music*. “**Me First**” hails from one those nether extremities, as is exemplified by the opening half minute of the first cut which opens with - surface static [on an old record?], moves on with a piano, a *crazed* drum machine, a female opera singer and finally, a strummed acoustic guitar – before it settles nicely into the country/pop groove of “7 September 2003” underpinned by Mike Bloom’s lap steel guitar, and the *count-in* [“1, 2, 3”] by band leader Blake Sennett. When Sennett’s vocal arrives some thirty seconds further on, it comes across as breathy and confessional, as he relates feelings concerning the loss of love.

As the second cut “Greetings In Braille” sonically winds down, it seamlessly progresses into the initially metronome styled drum beat of “My Baby’s A Dick” – a cut that features more countrified lap steel licks from Bloom. In fact the latter, invisible *join* between tracks, applies to *most* of the remaining material here. In addition, distortions of an instrument’s sound or electronically bleeps and squeaks are liberally sprinkled throughout the tracks – there’s even part of a phone conversation partway through “The Miles ‘Til Home.”

Elsewhere on this sonically resplendent, mostly, pop/folk collection there’s “Don’t Get Your Hopes Up” [which opens, melodically, with shades of a Las Vegas stage show soft shoe shuffle ala Frank and The Rat Pack], “Go On” [a prayer to a pill popping mother], “A Response To Greed” [which features a sister who “*still cuts her arms*”]. Given the foregoing, the penultimate “Don’t Blow It,” opens with the optimistic “*Someone out there loves you,*” and amounts to the *straightest* cut, lyrically, in this pack.

“**Me First**” is filled with confessional, sometimes haunted, anecdotes from *the wilderness*. They express the pain and loss endured while becoming an adult. Hell, there’s even an occasional dash of optimism expressed regarding the future. If the Beatles had ever got around to making a folk-rock album, then it would have sounded just like “**Me First.**” That said, this recording is best categorised as neo-folk.

Folkwax Rating 7 out of 10

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