

DANA

*A lone-wolf dropping truths, meet the Canadian singer who’s sticking up two fingers to an industry saturated with pop-stereotypes.*



Top by AMERICAN APPAREL

It’s a bleak Monday, and I’m lying on my bed chatting over the phone to Toronto-based singer Dana Wright. Contrary to typical interview technique, I’m telling her a story.

I’ve had her second track (as a solo artist anyway: Wright was previously in all-girl punk band Dentata) “Head” on repeat for the past five days. During one of hundreds of listens, I leave a café and out of nowhere there is the most insane downpour. Embracing the rain and spurred on by the combination of ethereal electronic beats and Wright’s haunting vocals, I throw my head back, think: “Fuck it!” and get soaked to the bone.

“I love those epic moments,” Wright exclaims. “It’s like that Backstreet Boys music video where they’re just chilling in the rain in those white T-shirts. I love it!” The Claire Edmondson directed clip for “Head” is on a slightly darker vibe than your average 90s boy band vid though. “It’s such a nice, floaty, pop-y song and because my old band was really dark and heavy. I really wanted to contrast the type of song with a darker, more fucked up vibe because they’re kind of parallel.” That video follows Wright, along with a motorcycle gang, as she kidnaps a male stripper and dumps his body.

“I just thought about what I’d do to get somebody out of my head, when like a guy drives you crazy, like what would you do? My cousin just happens to be in a motorcycle gang just outside of Toronto and I was like ‘Oh he can just come with all his boys and they can take care of it!’”

“Now, I look back I think like why did I care so much? Why was I so upset that he didn’t want to hang out with me anymore? He was a mess, but like, whatever! At least I wrote a song out of it.” Wright’s sass-packed attitude is inspiring – exactly how she intends.

“My idols and biggest inspirations are Marilyn Manson and Eminem,” she tells me. “Not just because I love their music but I also love that they are not just singers or rappers, but because the message in their music was so strong and it made people uncomfortable, and it made people think, and made people change.” Not content with radio-friendly tracks about “dumb shit”, Wright is fighting for music that’s angry. “Everyone’s so oppressed that they don’t even know that they have all this shit to let out. I want to encourage everybody. I want to drop some truths.”

Despite her battling with “men in the industry trying to tell [her] what to do”, Wright’s attitude is on point. She wants to use her music – and her social media presence – to inspire women and young girls everywhere. Her Instagram feed spills over with empowered images. “You seem to really own your body,” I venture. “Well, I worked as a waitress in a strip club, and I think that was a crash course in female empowerment.” She replies. “I have a lot of respect for women that do that, especially women that are really good at it, like more power to you, take advantage.”

Wright has worked with a host of leading creatives – many of them women. Petra Collins shot her music video debut for track “Prelude”, whilst back in the punk band Dentata days, Richard Kern shot the clip for “Earwig”. Does she have a kind of artist-gang I wonder? “I definitely have made relationships with a lot of people in the entertainment world because that’s what I’m active in. It’s awesome. But do I feel part of a gang? I don’t because even though I am friends with all those people I am also very transient. I’m kind of like a lone wolf and I do my own thing.” And who needs a crew when you’ve got a motorcycle gang at your disposal?