

GIRL POWER

Moody London trio make a substantial mark on second LP.



DAUGHTER NOT TO DISAPPEAR

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Misery

supposedly loves company, but on their follow-up to 2013's *If You Leave*, Daughter genuinely sound as if they could choose a life of complete hermetic solitude, phone buried in the garden, doorbell disconnected. The world created by the trio is so complete, so intricate and inward-looking, that it's initially difficult for passing strangers to find a door into their shuttered inner life. Singer Elena Tonra's voice has a hushed, private quality, almost as if she's whispering under her breath – or maybe one specifically targeted ear – while Igor Haefeli's guitars and Remi Aguilera's drums agitate and jitter behind her.

If listening to this record feels like eavesdropping, however, what's overheard is emotional dynamite. *Alone/With You* is a superb dissection of what happens when being with another person is even worse than being alone, while *Numbers*, with its grimly punning title, feels like *The xx* in desperate freefall.

There are flashes where Daughter do move closer to the world outside, though. *Doing The Right Thing* deals with ageing and mental health in a way few bands would dare, while there is even a flicker of rueful humour on *Alone/With You*, where Tonra decides getting a dog might solve her problems, or on the urgent flare of *No Care*, where nobody ever asks her to dance because, "I only know how to flail." They might want to be alone, but when they are this good, Daughter are going to have trouble keeping the crowds away. ★★☆☆

VICTORIA SEGAL

Download: *Alone/With You* | *No Care* | *Doing The Right Thing*

Daughter (Elena Tonra, centre: "her voice has a hushed, private quality, as if she's whispering under her breath.")



Daughter's Elena Tonra tells Victoria Segal about crafting the band's intricate second album.

Was it difficult to write a song with such harrowing subject matter as *Doing The Right Thing*?

"It was one of those songs that just came gushing out. It was originally about my grandmother and how I feel about Alzheimer's and dementia, and how much her illness affects me. I was trying to see things from her perspective, but it does shift a bit to me talking to my mother as well and the way that she must be feeling about her own mother. It floats

around a bit. Maybe it's one of those things that I just needed to write about but I probably didn't realise that until I had written it."

Why did you decide to commission short stories and short films to accompany the album?

"We worked with [*directors*] Iain Forsyth and Jane Pollard for the films, and Stuart Evers wrote the short stories. It was just a really lovely idea; we really wanted to make something beautiful that felt like short films, but didn't just feel like us

miming along because we're quite rubbish at that! I think we found it very interesting to see how our stuff would translate."

Are you lyrically influenced by short stories?

"I was introduced quite recently to [*American sci-fi short story writer and novelist*] Ray Bradbury, who I didn't know that well beforehand, but I think I'm much more about people and memories and places – real-life situations that I store up in my head which slowly all fall out into some kind of song."