

Meg Myers

Take Me to the Disco

Meg Myers is collapsed like a broken ragdoll on her hardwood floors in her Los Angeles apartment — crying uncontrollable, feeling something she's never felt before. It's that kind of cry you don't even wish upon your worst enemies — the kind that comes from that hidden place where all your demons are trying to break free.

You'd think something terrible had just happened, but quite the opposite. The singer/songwriter was just listening back to rough mixes of her new record, *Take Me to the Disco* (300 Entertainment), when a profound realization swept over her. "When I first wrote some of these new songs, I thought I knew what I was writing about. A lot had to do with a breakup. But since then I'd been on this spiritual, therapeutic journey and had a lot of revelations about myself and why I am the way I am," explains the Nashville-born, L.A.-based singer/songwriter.

"Listening back to some of these songs made me realize what I was really writing about... what was underneath it all," continues Myers, who grew up in a Jehovah's Witness household before breaking free to pursue music in L.A. at the age of 19. "All of a sudden it all made sense to me and that moment of realization just overwhelmed me with a flood of tears and joy. On the surface, I thought I was writing about love loss but I've learned it goes much deeper than that. It's going back to the child in me that needed to be healed. I've always written from a true place, but in getting to know myself better, I'm now writing from an even deeper level of honesty."

The dreamy, atmospheric title track, is one such song. "I had an epiphany on this one," she admits. "It started out being about wanting to escape, which is a common theme I write about it. I've always been a little obsessed with death and wanting to just be taken away from it all. It's something I've never been able to understand about myself until now. But, I realized that it wasn't about disappearing and disconnecting. It was actually about a primal need to not just connect to myself in a deeper way, but to connect to something larger than myself."

Likewise, on another album standout "Tourniquet," she looks at the stranglehold a bittersweet romance has had on her. "It's about knowing that you need to get out of something, but you can't because you are trapped. It's that moment you realize you're going to have to change everything you've ever known. It's time to turn off the life support machine and risk everything for your only chance to be re-born." she says.

Anyone familiar with Meg Myers' work shouldn't be too surprised at the intensity of what she just said. With her first three critically acclaimed releases, the EPs *Daughter in the Choir* (2013) and *Make a Shadow* (2014), and her 2015 full-length debut, *Sorry* (Atlantic Records), the artist made a name for herself on the emotional intensity of her

lyrics and music and her uncanny ability to vacillate between seducing the listener with an innocent whisper before jarring them with a guttural scream. Entertainment Weekly aptly described her knack for such emotive vocal dynamics as "mysteriously shape-shifting."

Billboard echoed that sentiment: "Myers delivered a strikingly visceral feeling and the sort of deeply relatable angst artists like Fiona Apple came up on. The result is at times guttural and primitive in its execution." Her unique brand of alt-rock spawned the Top 15 and Top 20 alternative radio hits, "Desire" and "Sorry," respectively, with MTV calling "Desire" the female answer to Nine Inch Nails' "Closer." Myers, who's graced the pages of every major publication from Rolling Stone to Cosmopolitan to the New York Times, landed coveted opening slots with the Pixies, Alt-J, and Awolnation, and featured on such notable festivals as Lollapalooza and Governors Ball Music Festival.

The difference, though, between her previous work and the 12 songs on *Take Me to the Disco* is quite profound. Sure, the angst is still there. So is the push-and-pull of those light and dark moments, but it's now peppered with newfound wisdom and perspective... and a little bit of humor.

Take the first single, "Numb," for instance. In the quiet moments in the verse, Myers almost jokingly succumbs to being a record label puppet as she sarcastically states, "Tell me how to write this/Tell me how to fight this war," before busting out her true feelings in a bombastic chorus where she wails, "You think you want the best for me/But nothing really matters/If you force it, it won't come/I guess I'm feeling numb." In another breath of vocal gymnastics she cheekily sings in a girlish tone, "I don't want to grow up. La la la la." "There are definitely more light-hearted moments on the record," she says. "It comes with finally being past certain situations and being able to look back and laugh at things."

The end result is the feeling of empowerment that comes when the artist realizes that she can use the trials and tribulations of the music industry and life to fuel her creativity instead of stifling it. "When I first wrote 'Numb,'" explains Myers, whose influences range from Tori Amos to Nine Inch Nails to Danny Elfman scores to classical music, "it was about my experience with a major record label. But as I dug deeper, I found that it goes back to some early childhood stuff and how shutting down, or escaping, felt like the safer thing to do. It used to be that all of the pressure made me lose feeling, but now I feel stronger to face the tougher stuff and let it empower me instead of drag me down. But, there are times I still fail at this."

Myers credits her new collaboration with the album's producer and main co-writer, Christian "Leggy" Langdon, with some of her creative breakthroughs. "Leggy had this amazing ability to really pull things out of me and he also knew what I was feeling unlike anyone else," says Myers.

Another standout on the album is the sexy rocker "Jealous Sea" where Myers faces her inner green-eyed monster head-on. "This is definitely a walk on the darker side, but it also shows the beauty in the darkness. I've always been drawn to those minor notes, and the dramatic swells and dynamics that you hear in classical music. But it's also influenced by bands like Nine Inch Nails and Depeche Mode."

To bring some of that vibe to the record, Myers enlisted Victor Indrizzo, who has played with Depeche Mode, to contribute drums/percussion to most songs on Take Me to the Disco. And, Myers used a live string section for the first time —The Section Quartet appears on six songs on the album.

Music is a form of escapism for many. But, Myers is finally done escaping. On Take Me to the Disco, she bravely faces her own reality head-on — fearless and empowered. But there is still work to be done. Adds Myers, "Making this record was healing, cathartic, and sometimes scary, but I think it made me a better artist. And, it's just the beginning. I have a lot of work to do. I have more to confront, and more to understand... more to say."