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# ALBUM REVIEW: SIGRID - HOW TO LET GO

## A BOLD + BRASH JOURNEY TO FREEDOM

★★★★★★☆☆☆

**G DAVID ROSKIN**  
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Sigrid Raabe has been no stranger to success over the last few years, from her debut album topping charts in her native Norway, to earning slots at festivals the world over and a feature in the number one single 'Times Like These' alongside artists at the top of their game.

No pressure to deliver on the sophomore record, How to Let Go, then. Our first introduction to Sigrid's new era came in the shimmer-pop meets Studio 54, 'Mirror' last summer. This self-assured track oozed confidence and beckoned the era of Sigrid 2.0, reassured in her style journey from the trademark white shirt, blue jeans outfit, into finding solace and love in whatever she wants to wear and shedding the uniform whenever she wants to.

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Whilst the record is intensely personal, 'It Gets Dark', the album opener, sees Sigrid wrestle with the dichotomy of life's up and downs, to reaching an understanding of these ebbs and flows, all with a thundering bassline and cinematic guitar accompanying her bold vocals. Though this track came about before COVID was even a thought in our minds, her ability to take her own experiences and create a place for us all to find solace in, to lose the trauma we picked up along the last two years in is where she shines. 'Burning Bridges' might well be a cleansing callout of an ex's crappy behaviour but feels an exercise in catharsis for us all letting go of whatever has pried on our minds through the

massive personal changes we've all faced. "You gotta let it go" she belts out with her delicious rasp prominent throughout.

No explicit references are made to the pandemic, but How To Let Go is soaked in its influence. The sermon-like layered vocals in 'Risk of Getting Hurt' grapple with taking the opportunities for life gives you, no matter the risk. Meanwhile 'Dancer' draws on Joni Mitchell's styles, '70s acoustic riffs and sheds a coat of fear, before diving into a huge disco-influenced banger, 'A Driver Saved My Life', giving notes of Bee Gees after her lockdown love of them. The whiplash between tracks feels natural and bridges us into a slower turn towards the end of the record.

Two thirds of the record is gripping, unpredictable and feels like Sigrid empowered and emblazoned with a new energy, the final third strips it all back for a focus on acoustics and vocals.

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However, there is a gap in this album where 'Head on Fire', her collaboration with BRIT Rising Star Award winner, Griff, would fit nicely. It's a shame to miss out on one of the best pop hits of the year so far and thematically it would blend well. Whilst the collaboration with Oli Sykes of Bring Me The Horizon, 'Bad Life', is a welcome and surprise addition, it doesn't feel like the best from either artist: it finds itself in a safe middle ground, rather than leaning too much into either's styling.

Starting loud, brash and reflective, How To Let Go closes looking forward to her legacy in 'High Note'. The struggles that clawed at her through the album are released in this melodic, mid-tempo hymn on layers of intoxicating guitar.

If there's any criticism to be had, it's that the standout track arrived to us first in 'Mirror', but that's not to say you won't find yourself lost in Sigrid's guide to struggling through life. How To Let Go might be a collection of pop bangers, dipping into folk and disco, but above all, it's Sigrid's bold and brash journey to freedom, and soon it'll be yours too.

*How To Let Go arrives May 6 via Island Records.*

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