



Last Days Of April

Even The Good Days Are Bad

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Since the mid-1990s, Stockholm's Last Days of April have created a succession of luminous, hook-laden LPs, earning the band's lead vocalist, guitarist, and all-around auteur, Karl Larsson, a reputation as a bonafide songwriter's songwriter. With *EVEN THE GOOD DAYS ARE BAD*, Larsson and Co. return with their 10th long player (following 2015's *Sea of Clouds*), a shimmering collection of eight new Larsson-penned songs that show him at the apex of his craft and LDOA achieving new levels of strength, honesty, and brilliance.

"You want new/New gets old/Is it worth it?/I don't know," Larsson sings on the album's title track, an introspective meditation that manages to be ecstatic, even anthemic. As earworms go, this one is an anaconda, and the sentiment has less to do with cynicism and resignation than wisdom and wonder. It's tempting to hear those lines as an epigraph for the album itself: With glistening guitars, swerving synth lines, punchy drumming, burnished analog production, and Larsson's vulnerable yet resilient vocals, *EVEN THE GOOD DAYS ARE BAD* is at once new and old, of the moment and utterly classic, timely and timeless.

Was it intended that way? "No, not conscious," Larsson says. "I only try and make the songs as I hear them in my head. I always think I'm onto something new with every record, but I'll take 'timeless' and 'classic.'"

EVEN THE GOOD DAYS ARE BAD began gestating in 2019, with Larsson unearthing songs dating back to the early 2000s and writing a gush of new material. The band's longtime rhythm section—drummer Magnus Olsson and bassist Rikard Lidhamn—joined Larsson that fall for two marathon days at Stockholm's legendary Studio Gröndahl. (LDOA have recorded several releases there, as have The Hives.)

"We recorded everything in Gröndahl to tape," Larsson says of the band's preferred approach to basic tracks. "All analog and tons of outboard. Classic stuff, you know... I'm a gear nut." (Frequent collaborator Fredrik Hermansson added atmospheric mellotron to "Had Enough" and Frans Hägglund engineered.) Larsson then brought the recordings to his home studio for overdubs and general TLC, taking his time to achieve the album's rich textures.

But something unexpected happened on the way to transcendent pop glory: a global pandemic. *EVEN THE GOOD DAYS ARE BAD* was already nearing completion, but the crisis slowed and complicated the process. More significantly, it also made the new record hauntingly, profoundly prescient. The title track now reflected the mood of the entire planet. On "Alone," when Larsson sings "When I wake up I feel alone/When I go to bed I feel alone," it's as if he's channeling the isolation we've all been enduring and making it better. "For lyrics," Larsson says, "I wanted them to be straightforward. No fuzz."

The result is totally cathartic, just what the doctor ordered for 2021. "Let it bring whatever feelings it brings," Larsson says of *EVEN THE GOOD DAYS ARE BAD*, dispensing a bit of helpful advice: "It sounds best played loud."

Tracklisting

- 1) Even The Good Days Are Bad
- 2) Run Run Run
- 3) Had Enough
- 4) Turbulence
- 5) Alone
- 6) Hopeless
- 7) Anything
- 8) Downer



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