

The Big Sleep

Nature Experiments

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Considering how quiet they've been over the past couple years, you'd think the Big Sleep decided to suddenly take their name seriously after the tireless tour cycle behind 2008's *Sleep Forever LP*. The truth is much simpler... "We took a little break, worked on stuff separately and just lived our lives," explains bassist/vocalist Sonya Balchandani. "It obviously took longer than we thought it would," adds guitarist/vocalist Danny Barria, "but I wasn't feeling rushed or pressured. I just wanted to write good songs." Which brings us to the hefty hooks and sugar-spun noise pop of *Nature Experiments*, the filler-free full-length Danny and Sonya have hinted at since 2000. That'd be the year the duo started cutting demos in the former's Brooklyn kitchen; demos that eventually shifted from a loose shoegaze sound (the *You Today, Me Tomorrow EP*) to the iridescent instrumentals and groove-locked guitar anthems of the Big Sleep's debut album, 2006's *Son of the Tiger*.

As promising as that LP was, it's nowhere near as focused and forceful as the tractor beam tracks the pair started recording at the beginning of 2011. Helped in part by Sonya's increased use of GarageBand as a songwriting tool and a more collaborative creative process, *Nature Experiments* is as robust as a Big Sleep record gets, bursting at the seams with restless rhythms and choppy power chords ("Ace"), venomous vocals and blown-out beats ("Meet Your Maker"), and effects pedals/synth pads that rub and ring out against some of the band's most climatic choruses yet ("Valentine," "Ghosts In Bodies," "Ladders"). And if you need a breather, there's always the psych-steeped balladry of "1001" and "Wood on the Water."

"There was definitely a tunnel vision thing going on with our last record," says Danny. "That pressure was cool and intense, but the guiding principle this time around was to take our time and do whatever we needed to. We'd work on things separately and then meet in each other's living rooms with just an acoustic guitar and a keyboard, which is funny considering that's exactly how the band started."

"This band's always been about what comes out of the two of us working together," adds Sonya. "I think it's normal to write a little past the edge of your capabilities, so then you have to deliver, and the next time around, you end up pushing yourself again. We are always just looking for and editing ourselves towards what feels right, what we can both agree is putting across a feeling in a style that's truly 'us'."



TRACK LIST

Side A

01 #1

02 Ace

03 Valentine

04 Ghosts in Bodies

05 Wood on the Water

Side B

06 Red Carpet

07 Ladders

08 Four Wishes

09 Meet Your Maker

10 1001



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