



"Bought to Rot" ranges from screaming blasts of punk to poppier tracks reminiscent of Ted Leo's propulsive tunes to fuzzy, gritty rock that picks up where The Strokes left off on 'Is This It.'" —**THE NEW YORK TIMES**

"Worldly nods to Tom Petty and gritty yet warming brand of Americana."
—**CLASSIC ROCK MAGAZINE**

LAURA JANE GRACE & THE DEVOURING MOTHERS

BOUGHT TO ROT

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To say **musician, author and activist Laura Jane Grace** has had a defiant career would be the understatement of the year. Whether being accused of leaving the DIY punk scene to pursue a major label career over a decade ago, or courageously challenging people's conceptions of gender identity with a bombshell *Rolling Stone* article, Grace has remained a daring and influential cultural figure in her over 20+ years of creating dynamic art across various mediums. Sure, she's bound to worry some fans with her decision to press pause on **Against Me!** to release a **more intimate singer-songwriter leaning solo album** under the name Laura Jane Grace & the Devouring Mothers, but her artistic motivation cast her determination in steel. "In the back of my head I was thinking, 'fuck all of you, I'm going to do this anyway,'" she says with a smile.

With this conviction came liberation, because few expectations equals total freedom. Indeed on the record's opening cut, "China Beach," Grace delivers a bold, lip-curling statement of intent: "**Learn to trust yourself, no one else matters / Respect the source and always welcome failure.**" And it's in this spirit—with the help of **Against Me!** drummer **Atom Willard** and long-term **AM!** producer **Marc Jacob Hudson** on bass—that *Bought to Rot*, the debut album from Laura Jane Grace & the Devouring Mothers, came into existence.

Bought to Rot was written largely in motion—on tour, in Spain, Australia, Amsterdam hotel rooms, and some at home in Chicago. It's a **record scorched with honesty, unapologetically confessional**, capturing many moments snipped from Grace's life and stitched together in song. Although it's a step and a twist away from **Against Me!**'s sonic blueprint, there's still **a kinetic punk energy that vibrates throughout**. These compositions are looser, stripped, but with a melodic pop immediacy pushing to the fore. "I have my main gig, but I'm still doing this thing," she continues. "It's undeniable and it's really good and here's the proof ... so what are you going to do with that?" Well, it has to go out into the world: via **Bloodshot Records**, the storied **Chicago indie** boasting a past & present roster that includes **Ryan Adams**, **Neko Case**, **Murder by Death**, **Old 97's** and **Justin Townes Earle**.

The seeds of this project were initially sown when Grace, Hudson and Willard introduced the band on a small run of dates in 2016 that included Grace delivering impassioned readings of journal entries between stripped-down **Against Me!** songs, most of which were featured in **her critically acclaimed memoir *Tranny: Confessions Of Punk Rock's Most Infamous Anarchist Sellout***. Coming off the cycle for *Shape Shift With Me*, **Against Me!**'s latest full-length studio album, and a North American arena tour with **Green Day**, Grace was asked to perform a

Mountain Goats cover on the podcast *Welcome to Night Vale*, and it was then that she received a massive sense of renewed momentum overall.

With additional songs penned that felt more stand-alone than a proper **Against Me!** offering, *Bought to Rot* resulted in 14 gripping tracks detailing Grace's fractured relationship with her adopted hometown of Chicago ("I Hate Chicago"), the act of interpersonal acceptance ("The Friendship Song"), all-consuming affection until our ultimate demise ["Apocalypse Now (& Later)"], complicated romance ("The Airplane Song"), and reconciling everything in the end. As a complete body of work, the album stands as **the most musically diverse collection of songs Grace has written to date, and is what she affectionately calls her "Scorpio" record** – redolent in sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll.

Additionally inspired in large part by **Full Moon Fever**, the first album Grace ever owned, *Bought to Rot* finds her at the same age **Tom Petty** was when he created his classic solo debut. In light of his recent passing, Grace was even able to pay direct homage to him on the recording. "I bought a '64 Fender Jaguar off Stan Lynch, drummer of the Heartbreakers, and I always like to think that maybe Petty had picked it up and strummed a couple chords on it," she says. "**I always liked the idea of having my fingers dance on the same fret board as my hero.**"

There's a refreshing sense of variety present on *Bought to Rot*, an album that features a vast array of musical textures and lyrics that read like separate short stories throughout. "My approach musically to the record was that **I wanted it to feel like a mixtape.**" Grace recently told *Rolling Stone*. "Like OK, you've got this Nirvana-like song, you've got a Cure song. It was musically freeing, in that way, to just be playing whatever was coming to me as I was writing and not having to think about it." As such, "I Hate Chicago," a tongue-in-cheek centerpiece to the album that has become a bit of a live favorite to Chicagoans and non-locals alike, finds Grace at her most wry and entertainingly venomous, lambasting the city's sports teams and revered bands, its festivals and its unfriendly denizens over an **Americana-angled jaunt**.

Created at a breakneck pace, *Bought to Rot* is finally here and ready **to be consumed & dissected: to be loved, to be hated**. It's an album propelled by a sense of restless, forward motion and the inherent need for Grace to continue evolving as an artist and person the only way she knows how. "I don't want to write about these same things anymore," she says. "I need some new sources of inspiration. And I don't want to be negative. **I want to write some positive, happy songs, and I wanted that to be inspired by positive, happy living, too.**"

For press needs, contact: Tito Belis at tito@clarioncallmedia.com or Josh Zanger at josh@bloodshotrecords.com

Bloodshot Records 3039 W. Irving Park Rd, Chicago, IL 60618
Ph: 773-604-5300 Fax: 773-604-5019 Web: bloodshotrecords.com