

Stay Gold, by First Aid Kit

reviewed by [Steve Thorngate](#) in the [September 3, 2014](#) issue

In Review



Stay Gold

First Aid Kit
Columbia

On the Söderberg sisters' third album and their second with producer Mike Mogis, the sound is bigger and lush, even utilizing strings and winds at times. But it remains rooted in '70s folk rock, straight-ahead and fingerpicky and richly effective.

And the main event is still the Swedish duo's refreshingly full-throated singing—especially younger sister Klara, who sounds like a less flashy Neko Case.

Some of the songs are distractingly wordy. Not constantly so—like the Mountain Goats or Mogis collaborator Conor Oberst—but here and there, a huge phrase piling suddenly into a too-small meter. It's a very Dylanish affectation, though where Dylan sells such word jumbles with his rare knack for phrasing, the Söderbergs—who aren't singing in their first language—stumble a bit. The songs mostly don't have memorable melodic hooks, either. But they're carried well by mood, rhythm, and some nice variation of stylistic feel, from the lilting six of "The Bell" to the subdued country waltz of "Cedar Lane." And it all comes down to the singing: separately, in unison, or in parts, the sisters' voices shine.