



## Paste Magazine - "The Best of What's Next" - Devon Sproule

**Hometown:** Kingston, Ontario;  
Charlottesville, Virginia

**Album:** I Love You, Go Easy

**For Fans of:** Neko Case, Lucinda Williams,  
My Brightest Diamond

"I'm desperate for entertainment over here!" confesses Devon Sproule, lounging in the bedroom of her modest Berlin apartment. With her husband, singer-songwriter Paul Curreri, gone on a solo tour, Sproule (a journey-woman who's previously bounced around from Kingston, Ont., to Charlottesville, Va.) is doing her best to keep herself amused, though much is lost in translation. "All the German TV is dubbed," she sighs. "Last night, my Internet went out, and I ended up watching Flashdance dubbed into German!"

Many artists, particularly those who come from small towns, dream of making a go of it in Europe, surrounding themselves with art and culture, regardless of linguistic and social differences. Few actually follow through on that dream, but Sproule and Curreri aren't exactly your everyday couple. Having spent the bulk of her childhood as a member of the Twin Oaks commune in Virginia, Sproule was streaked with an independent spirit—the same spirit that led her to toward music, and her first solo album, simply titled *Devon*, released at the ripe age of 16.

A decade or so before her German relocation, Sproule was already battling what “home” even meant, abandoning her commune and high school for a life on the road—touring across the U.S as a teenager. In real-time, wrestling with the “ever-present techno-bass” that surges through her thin apartment walls, she may be a bit out of place—a quirky country girl thrust into the artsy big city of Berlin—but it’s all part of her particular journey: “Luckily, Berlin is made up of so many different kinds of people and so many expats, so there’s tons of different shit going on. But at first, I was a little freaked out about it—Paul and I went to an art opening. The beer was good, and there was a crate of grapes that everyone was eating, but the art didn’t do it for me at all. Then I went and saw a show, and it was a guy DJ-ing with cassettes—which, I hear, are back in. It was pretty lame. But I’ve sort of had a change of heart since then. Just getting into the open-mindedness of it all. It’s like anywhere—lots of crap. But I think the good stuff is pretty good.”

“I still refer to [Charlottesville] as home now,” she says, “but almost accidentally. It’s the kind of place I want to end up in, to go back to.”

*I Love You, Go Easy*, Sproule’s sixth studio album, captures an artist—and a person—in limbo: emotionally, physically, sonically. The heart of the album is “Now’s the Time,” a gorgeous country strummer adorned with pedal-steel and buzzing harmonies; on the other side of the stylistic spectrum is “Monk/Monkey,” a quirky pop number with colorful woodwinds from her backing band, *The Silt*, a trio from Toronto. Connecting those musical dots is Sproule’s twangy, teary voice and an ability to finesse striking, poetic language. Musically bright and varied, the songs were, surprisingly, inspired by tragedy and loneliness.

“I’d only heard a bit of [The Silt’s] music, but I knew it was loose...coming from a place of total musical understanding, but almost rebellious in how experimental and flawed it was,” Sproule says, suddenly shifting her tone from banter to soul-bearing. “And I was pretty sure that they had never heard my music, so that really freed me up to write however I wanted. And that timed itself pretty well with how I was feeling at the time.”

“A close friend of mine had died,” Sproule continues. “She collected cats, and there was one left over, after she was gone, that hadn’t been adopted. We took her—Clover Sprout became Clover Sprout Sproule—and though Paul was only being generous at first with his willingness, we both totally went head over heels for her. It wasn’t so much about her—she was just a cat, and kind of a bitchy one at that—Or maybe they all are? It was about seeing each other getting attached to her...about coming home drunk and saying, as we unlocked the front door, ‘I wonder if there’s anyone home? Anyone home in here? Any small furry friends to wake up and annoy?’“

That sense of longing, of desperation—it’s buried in the I Love You, Go Easy’s lingering melancholia, even if the tunes themselves go down as smooth as molasses. “But at the same time, we’re also in that window of our lives between being totally young and being at the age when your parents need help, when you have to decide once and for all if you want kids...all that shit.”

Bleeding in from the apartment walls is the sound of a neighboring guitarist, “strumming and wailing” through the evening, oblivious of his own noise. “So in terms of moving,” Sproule says, “it was kind of... now’s the time.”