



DECEMBER 2015 ISSUE

THE BITTER SPRINGS - CUTTLERFISH & LOVE'S REMAINS

Remains of the day

Stretching to over two hours in length, The Bitter Springs' previous 2CD release *Everyone's Cup Of Tea* was an ambitious, yet refreshing indie-pop infusion featuring eccentric, resonant songs celebrating unsung heroes such as lifeboat men, redoubtable Irish construction workers and hippies.

The Middlesex stalwarts' latest is arguably easier to digest in one sitting. With most of the LP's 14 tracks exceeding the five minute mark, it could perhaps have benefitted from a little additional pruning, but it still clocks in at a relatively user-friendly 65 minutes while including three of Simon Rivers and company's most quirky guitar-pop anthems to date in Poetry Emulsion, the alcohol-soused Shanks's Nightmare and the bouncy It's Yer Birthday.

Elsewhere, the Springs enthusiastically flow on into pastures new. The pedal steel-inflected two-step Some Muthas Do 'Ave 'Em (sic) and *Muswell Hillbillies*-esque Only The Sour Grapes Are Free expand further on the rootsy flavours that spiced up *Everyone's Cup Of Tea* while the abstract, yet curiously engaging Cut All Fish (lugubriously narrated by The Long Decline's Kenny Wisdom) recalls Tindersticks' fatalistic My Sister. Undeniably the album's apogee, however, is Something Good Together – a vivid, emotionally-scarred depiction of a couple stuck in a relationship in seemingly terminal decline.

Harvey | HARVEY 005 (CD/LP) **Reviewed by Tim Peacock**