Across three well-received EPs of “sad, hard music”, German quartet Letters Sent Home have made their name as a band who match infectious melody and huge choruses, with the lyrical depth and heart of people with a lot to say. Now, having earned praise for their records and gigged with the likes of Blackout Problems and As Everything Unfolds, they prepare to release their debut album Forever Undone.

Formed while at school in Germany’s northern countryside in 2015, and becoming a serious project a couple of years later following singer Emily Paschke and bassist Lara Ripke’s time studying in North America, Letters Sent Home’s music – an energised mix of pop-punk, alt.rock and emo – has served as a vessel for Emily’s inner turbulence. It’s reflected in the album’s name, a line lifted from one of the songs.

“It took us so long to find that title,” says Emily. “The whole purpose of the album is that I'm talking about my personal trauma, and how you never actually fully heal from stuff that happens to you, but learn to live with it. You may bear scars, but those scars are never going to fade fully. There's always something you can work on. I feel like you never you're never fully, completely satisfied or happy.”

All of this is set to music that’s as electrified and youthful as Emily’s lyrics are deep. Having primed themselves with their previous work, and spent two years perfecting the album with long-time producer and friend Julian ‘Polar’ Huisel, Forever Undone is Letters Sent Home – completed by guitarist Robin Werner and drummer Louis Schramm – embracing this opportunity and shooting their shot.

“It’s been two years of writing and really getting into all the little details to make the best album possible,” says Robin. “We spent so much time writing it, then rewriting it, going to the studio, getting everything right, to finally get it out now is a relief. We want it to get heard and we’re hoping to reach new people. It’s exciting to see what people think of the songs and if they connect to anything we're saying, because it's so personal. I think it's a big step out of the comfort zone.”

You can hear this in the way the songs often look outward at the world, rather than gazing inward as in the past. Purposefully, first single and lead track Request Denied is designed as a bridge between the old, and accepting things that can’t properly be healed, and the new.

“That song is almost about how we wanted to close that chapter of always talking about mental health and talking about the same thing,” says Emily. “We’ve talked about it so much and nothing’s changed. So instead of saying everything's gonna get better, we're saying, ‘Well, maybe it's not, but it's fine.’”

One example of this new dynamic is Ignorance, a song dealing with the generational gap between those who currently control the future, and those who will have to live in it.

“Younger people have this kind of pressure to change society, to change politics, to do something about climate change and meat consumption, but they're not the ones who are able to,” Emily explains. “The song is basically a call for help to the older generations, the ones who are actually in charge, to help us with. One line is, ‘We don't want to put you down, we need you.’ The younger generation don’t want to have a war with these people – it’s the exact opposite. We want to work with you!”

Elsewhere, on I hope I die first., the band take a look at “loving someone so much that you would die for them” and how unhealthy such an obsession can become.

“It’s about feeling so in love that you wish you would die first, because you cannot imagine your life without that person, and you would rather die first then have them leave,” says Emily. “The song does have a positive, because you are confessing your love for a person, but on the other side it also portrays the negative points. Love is a beautiful thing, but it could also hurt and it can also be toxic.”

Ambitious, meaningful and full of life, Forever Undone is a record set to be one of the most exciting debuts of 2024. One that sees everything coming solidly together for Letters Sent Home.