



The Pierces

THE PIERCES  
Thirteen Tales of Love  
and Revenge  
(Lizard King)

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Home schooled by bohemian parents in the Deep South, sisters Catherine and Allison Pierce claim to have suffered a kidnapping and strict training in French and Russian ballet before leaving Alabama for Brooklyn. Luckily for us, the New York borough is where they met and began working with producer Roger Greenawalt (Ben Kweller, Adam Greene) on their latest album, *Thirteen Tales of Love and Revenge*.

Though its parts may seem familiar — like the perfectly manufactured and formulaic melodies and backbeats of a Top 40 hit, complete with chimes and handclaps — the whole of *Thirteen Tales* does not. Its surprising mix of carnival-esque, gypsy rhythms; blues sentiments; and dance-pop aesthetics keeps each song interesting. The girls' sultry vocals, which show a fervor and nuance as distinct as their background, help their album transcend some clichés of the traditional pop it borrows from.

Harmonizing from listless deadpan on "Boring" to lusty stutters on "Lights On," from haunting echoes on "Secret" to full-on pop melody on "Lies," the Pierces' voices — at times nearly indistinguishable from each other — are infectious and can span diverse genres. Reminiscent of Sam Phillips' throaty folk, the Cardigans' sweet catchiness, or Morcheeba's distant hypnotics, the sisters rely on an ambition and talent that are genuine, which makes this album undeniably good. — *Andrea Bussell*