

<http://www.markprindle.com/dwarvesa.htm#born>

## The Dwarves are Born Again – MVD 2011



Well, it sure *smells* like it just came out of a vagina!

Some people feel that the Dwarves lost it with **Come Clean**. I don't understand this opinion at all; that disc was every bit as fast, mean and hooky as **Dwarves are Young and Good Looking**, just with a few new production tricks. I love pretty much every song on it!

*Most* people feel that the Dwarves lost it with **The Dwarves Must Die**. I completely understand this opinion, and in many ways agree with it. The aggression and menace was gone, replaced by musical variety and arrogance. Still, I tried very hard to like it, and eventually came to enjoy several of the songs, even though the Dwarves as I knew them were no more.

However, as the final living hold-out, I am now nauseated to report that the Dwarves have totally, completely, inarguably LOST IT. **The Dwarves are Born Again** is a slick, contrived collection of radio-friendly pop-punk, forced and derivative hardcore, pissy attitude rock and humorless novelty music. And yes, all of these elements could be found on **Must Die**, but at least Blag could still write a melody at that time. Aside from three or four songs, **Born Again** is literally just a collection of clichés – as if he were a hack session musician writing music for 'edgy' radio spots or film trailers.

Although they (meaning 'he,' since 'Blag Dahlia' and 'The Dwarves' have been synonymous at least as far back as **Come Clean**) manage to cram 18 songs into 31 minutes, very few deserve even the minute and a half of life that they're granted. Self-referential, smirking titles like "The Dwarves are Still the Best Band Ever," "The Band That Wouldn't Die" and "Do the HeWhoCannotBeNamed" welcome you to a world where The Dwarves are nothing but a harmless Vegas act – sort of a Me First and the Gimme Gimmes with bawdier lyrics. And it's sad as Hell that Me First and the Gimme Gimmes – a *cover band* – are still ten times more creative than the music on this album. Here are the specifics:

-- Radio-friendly pop-punk: "The Dwarves are Still the Best Band Ever," "Looking Out for Number One," "Happy Birthday Suicide," "Working Class Hole"

-- Dwarves-by-numbers hardcore: "Stop Me," "It's A Wonderful Life of Sin," "We Only Came to Get High," "F.U.T.Y.D."

-- Shitty arrogant snot rock: "15 Minutes," "Bang Up," "Candy Now," "Your Girl's Mom"

-- Dr. Demento bullshit: "Fake ID," "Do the HeWhoCannotBeNamed," "Zip Zero," "The Band that Wouldn't Die"

-- Chugging punk-metal: "You'll Never Take Us Alive," "I Masturbate Me"

-- Actual good songs: N/A

Okay, that last comment wasn't quite true; I do like four of the songs pretty well. "You'll Never Take Us Alive" is a nice thrashy Bad Religion thing, "We Only Came to Get High" is slightly less derivative than the other hardcore punkers, and both "The Dwarves are Still the Best Band Ever" and "Happy Birthday Suicide" match earlier tracks like "Better Be Women" and "Saturday Night" for beach blanket goodness. But four good songs out of EIGHTEEN!? And they're SHORT good songs too!

Here are a few more observations, presented in handy non-paragraph form: -- I wrote a song called "Working Class Hole" in 1988, when I was 15. The title wasn't clever *then*.

-- "F.U.T.Y.D." is an abbreviation for "Fuck U 'Til You Die." That's right: they replaced the first 'you' with 'U' so that, when abbreviated, the title would have "F.U." in it. Furthermore, the title line is sung to the riff of "Throw That World Away." And it's not a reference; Blag simply forgot that he'd already used the riff.

-- The most memorable guitar line on the record is stolen from The Beatles' "I Feel Fine."

-- "Fake ID" sounds like The Offspring. The Mother Fucking *OFFSPRING*.

-- That guy who screamed "River City Rapist" on **Come Clean** handles vocals on like half the album -- and I'm only barely exaggerating.

-- I hate this CD.

In conclusion, the infamous Dwarves of **Blood, Guts & Pussy** fame are now content to bring you polished, calculated garbage. Whether this is a cynical attempt to break big on ClearChannel or simply all that's left of Blag Dahlia's once-colossal songwriting ability is hard to say. What's much easier to say is that they probably should've just stayed dead.