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His Name Was Yesterday

Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**

Yes Virginia, Jesus and Metal can live together in harmony. If **His Name Was Yesterday** demonstrates anything, it shows that hard rocking music has the gumption to work "Dear God" into the lyrics without even a trace of irony. As a metal fan who can remember coveting older kids' copies of Iron Maiden albums - largely because of some suggestive (to a pre-teen at least) cover art - it's still a bit hard to place **His Name Was Yesterday**. They use a really hard, snarling edge in their vocals and instrumental approach on tunes like "Where It Ends" and "Killshed," reminiscent of classic death metal like *Slayer*, but "Where It Ends" has a melodic component that goes way beyond metal ballads. This tune, along with others like "Lost Our Way" and "Memory Of Me" tells the story of a band that wants to be appreciated for vocal styling as much as raw power. There's almost a tinge of "The O.C." at work here, song elements you could imagine as the backdrop for some emotional TV breakup or spoiled, post-teen drama. To complicate things further, we're pretty sure all the "Dear God" comments suggest that **His Name Was Yesterday** is attempting to move a stereotypically profane musical genre into more sacred territory.



Perhaps we're off-base on the Jesus Rocks! angle, but we don't think so... It's hard sometimes to separate the devil from the deep-blue sky in Metal, since it does a great job of co-opting religious themes. In other words, the trappings of worship and devotion have found their way into many a Metal tune, but in a satanical context. When **His Name Was Yesterday** proclaims in "No More Tomorrow,"

*But still I am haunted
 By words I did not say
 And a life I gave away*

are they talking about being reborn in Christ or sacrificing themselves to Satan? It's a fine line that many listeners won't even recognize, if all they're looking for is head-nodding goodness. Other phrases like *When your judgment comes* (from "Killshed") paint a consistent picture of rejecting worldly affairs, looking for redemption, and transformation. Again, there's an extremely fine line between these lyrics and something like Pantera's "Becoming":

*I'm becoming more than a man
 More than you ever were
 Driven and burning
 To rise beyond Jesus*

A key difference is that **His Name Was Yesterday** seems to mostly focus on leaving behind violence and degradation, setting them apart from a certain stream of Metal that actively promotes this kind of action.

The freshman entry from **His Name Was Yesterday** concludes, like so many classic Metal albums, with an acoustic ballad. There's every indication from this record that the band is serious about their music, but they'll need to move beyond cliches and create something with a unique stamp. The hybrid quality mentioned earlier has potential, but it sounds right now as if the band set out to record a demo, as if they'd be equally comfortable releasing their next album geared for Top 40 radio play, or producing music for television. The future is always uncertain, but **His Name Was Yesterday** possesses enough musical talent to shape their creative direction, God willing...

-Fridtjof, GameVortex Communications AKA Matt Paddock

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