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## HeWhoCanNotBeNamed "Sunday School Massacre"

(MVD Audio 2010)

When a musician with a longtime history with a band (or bands, plural) finally goes solo, it can be a big deal. Will he show off his musical chops in a way that he couldn't within the confines of the band? Or will he go off in a completely different direction? The Dwarves guitarist HeWhoCanNotBeNamed could be showing off his axe skills or shocking fans by creating something remarkably un-Dwarves, like a classical symphony or something equally wholesome. Instead, HeWho decided to draw, musically, from his rock experience and, lyrically, from his experiences as a counselor/teacher with teenagers suffering from mental illness or abuse.



Those familiar with the Dwarves won't be surprised: the lyrical content of "Sunday School Massacre" is dark and the music is high energy, pounding rock. That bounding rock energy comes through on opener "Happy Suicide" and its follow-up "Machine Boy" as they set the familiar and enjoyable tone. Dwarves' frontman Blah Dahlia croons smoothly on the retro sounding "Superhero" while sometime Dwarves member Rex Everything, aka Nick Oliveri, tackles the delicate sounding "Medication" by adding some heaviness. HeWho's vocals get a reverberating treatment on tracks like "Duct Tape Love" and "Hate Song" that leaves them garbled although the strong melodies come through. Perhaps the most moving track on the album is the '50s style power ballad "Toxine" where HeWho drops the façade offers something more sympathetic and emotional.

Fans of the Dwarves will feel right at home with HeWho's new album. If not just from the music that can be just as catchy as in your face, then from the appearances of Dahlia, Oliveri and other familiar faces. It's the same cast of characters doing pretty much the same routines but on a different day with a different director. On the one hand, it really shows where HeWho's heart is both musically and artistically with this rough and edgy rock that's got its poppy moments. But, admittedly, it's a little disappointing that he didn't take the road less traveled, not that this road doesn't have its own fun to offer.

C+

- Corinne



posted September 1, 2010

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