

Sworn Enemy - Living On Borrowed Time (2014)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Do or Die* 3:22 02. *Hard Way* 2:00 03. *Broken Hope* 3:22 04. *Slipping Away* 3:15 05. *No Apologies* 3:14 06. *One Eye Open* 3:32 07. *No Mercy* 3:41 08. *Never Forget* 3:22 09. *Stand And Deliver* 3:18 10. *Nothing Changes* 2:57 Sal Lococo - vocals Matt Garzilli - guitar Mike Puch - bass guitar Jeff Cummings - guitar Danny Lamagna - drums

Sworn Enemy took a few years longer than usual to release their latest album, *Living On Borrowed Time*, but that time away hasn't dulled their upbeat hardcore/thrash hybrid. While they kept busy touring throughout Europe and the U.S. after the release of *Total World Domination* in 2009, things seem to have been quiet since 2012 or so.

Lineup changes came about since the last album, with vocalist Sal Lococo the lone remaining original member. The new members contribute their part to ensure the music doesn't stray away from what Sworn Enemy have been playing since the mid '00s.

Though the band was originally founded as a hardcore act, it wasn't long until their riffs got thrashy and the tempos picked up. The band hasn't lost their hardcore roots, with gang chants and mosh-worthy breakdowns still part of the foundation. Those elements are in full effect on the album, as proven by the old-school attitude of "Slipping Away" and the chugging pace driving "No Mercy."

This album is at its best when the band appears ready to tear the world down with just their amps alone. "Do or Die" and "Hard Way" are a fantastic duo to start the album, both of the speedy variety. The shredding guitars on "Broken Hope" give it a 1980s flavor that is hard not to smile at. As per the norm for them, the songs have little fluff, with no one song reaching four

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minutes. Even when a song doesn't have the right impact, it's not around long enough for the listener to grow restless.

There is a twist thrown in thanks to the soft introduction to "One Eye Open." This melodic turnabout is a low-key act in a collection of songs lacking that dynamic. The song, as all the other ones do, eventually turns into a rager, but that momentary glimpse into something more weighty is pleasant. An instance like that makes up for the cringing motivational speech from Sal in the preceding "No Apologies."

Living On Borrowed Time is typical Sworn Enemy, which is both a comforting fact and a sign of the band stuck in a particularly stubborn mind frame. You don't expect the band to be pulling out ten-minute opuses or dramatic moods, but other than the subtle acoustics on "One Eye Open," the album rips forward with little deviation from their formula.

That doesn't make it any less enjoyable or not worthy of fists flying in the air, though. After fifteen years, Sworn Enemy are still capable of getting heads banging and a raucous atmosphere churning. --- Dan Marsicano, heavymetal.about.com

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