Miraculous Mule - Two Tonne Testimony (2017)

01. Holy Fever 05:35 02. Shave 'Em Dry 03:32 03. Sound Of The Summer 04:08 04. Where Monsters Lead 04:29 05. Daddy Grace 04:48 06. Two Tonne Testimony 04:27 07. They Cut We Bleed 04:43 08. The Fear 02:49 09. We Know About Cha 02:03 10. Blues Uzi (Reprisal) 06:55 Michael J. Sheehy - Guitar, Keyboards, Percussion, Loops, Vocals Patrick McCarthy - Bass, Lap Steel Guitar, Banjo, Harmonica, Percussion, Loops, Vocals Ian Burns - Drums, Percussion, Vocals

It’s only because the bands from ZZ Top to Motorhead to Rush to all the others keep proving MV’s theory correct that it becomes a truism – but the three-piece band is just right. And brother, when it’s a three-piece primal blues band it is just about perfect.

Of course, when that three-piece primal blues band has this as a couplet in the title track of their new album; “so I joined a religious cult, figured I could get some kicks. They shaved my head and when I looked in the mirror, I bore the mark of 666” then pretty much we’d sell our soul to get in a rancid transit van and follow them on tour.

Nevertheless that line is on “Two Tonne Testimony” and Miraculous Mule are the best primal blues band out of errrm, well North London.

Essentially, it’s like this. If the blues started when Robert Johnson went to the crossroads and did a deal with the Devil, then for its continuation, these three, Singer Michael J Sheehy, brother Patrick McCarthy on bass and Ian Burns on drums, decided to go back to those crossroads, punch Beelzebub in the face, kick him a few times when he’s on the ground and reclaim the prize.

Like some dirty line between The Bonnevilles and Jim Jones Revue, MM get down to the job of leading their misfit congregation on “Holy Fever” (sample line “she’s only happy when she’s on her knees, but she loves Jesus more than she loves me” and carry on with the swinging, groove filled and pretty much filthy “Shave ‘Em Dry” which is what Rival Sons would sound like if they stopped being mystical and trying to be The Doors.

“Sound Of Summer” adds a funky side, but just like some bored housewife posing for Readers Wives photos, there’s something seedy here which occasionally reveals itself, “while the city burns and cool kids bleed” offers one of its key lines.

And after “Where Monsters Lead” has taken the rise of the far-right to task, “Daddy Grace” is a return to the rabble-rousing fire and brimstone stuff that these boys do so well. In fact, to be truthful, there’s nothing these boys don’t do well.

“They Cut We Bleed” has a mighty riff and bigger intentions, “The Fear” is a walk down some soulful side street, but one that probably has a mugger down the end with a flick knife ready to take all your worldly possessions.

As record heads for home, it does so with “We Know All About Cha”, which manages to play the blues like you would if you’d listened to Motorhead for three days straight, then it manages to head down to the swamps of the southern delta for “Blues Uzi (The Reprise)” which is slower, more deliberate and – even for this record – more unsettling. Think Clutch circa “Electric Worry” and you ain’t too far away from the mark.

Blues? Yeah it is. But not as you know it. It’s heavy, funny, dark and original. And it kicks like a mule. Plus, it’s brilliant. Did we mention that? Get ready to testify. ---Andy Thorley, maximumvolumemusic.com

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