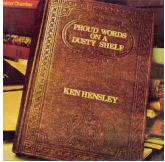


Ken Hensley - Proud Words On A Dusty Shelf (1973)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 04 November 2013 16:49 - Last Updated Monday, 28 May 2018 07:59

Ken Hensley - Proud Words On A Dusty Shelf (1973)



01. *When Evening Comes* [0:04:38.66] 02. *From Time To Time* [0:03:39.01] 03. *A King Without A Throne* [0:03:53.55] 04. *Rain* [0:03:15.41] 05. *Proud Words* [0:03:18.62] 06. *Fortune* [0:05:20.72] 07. *Black Hearted Lady* [0:03:38.03] 08. *Go Down* [0:03:11.28] 09. *Cold Autumn Sunday* [0:05:29.03] 10. *The Last Time* [0:02:47.61] Musicians: Ken Hensley – guitar, keyboards, vocals Dave Paul – bass Lee Kerlake – drums

This is the solo debut of Uriah Heep's resident keyboardist and top songwriter, but it isn't the heavy metal epic one might expect. In fact, *Proud Words On A Dusty Shelf* uses electric guitar sparingly and instead goes for a moody soundscape built on acoustic guitar and piano. Songs like "Black Hearted Lady" and "The Last Time" even evoke a bit of a country and western feel, thanks to their use of mellow-sounding slide guitar. This subtle sonic style puts Hensley's songwriting in the spotlight and that is a good thing because each of the songs is well-crafted and tuneful: a subtle combination of acoustic guitar and synthesizer brings out the haunting, delicately crafted melody of "From Time To Time" and "Black Hearted Lady" effectively evokes its mood of heartbreak with a descending acoustic guitar riff. The album's subtlety also highlights the strength of Ken Hensley's vocals, which often sound close to his Uriah Heep bandmate David Byron. However, *Proud Words On A Dusty Shelf* doesn't fully abandon the rock and roll muscle that made Uriah Heep famous: "Fortune," is a mid-tempo rocker whose complex, dramatic arrangement gets the closest to sounding like Uriah Heep and "Cold Autumn Sunday," subtly deploys some heavy electric guitar and pounding drums to convey its mood of churning emotions (note: this track also became an FM radio favorite). The only song that feels like a filler is a remake of Hensley's Uriah Heep track "Rain," a pleasant but unnecessary addition that sounds too close to the original to make it worth including. Otherwise, *Proud Words On A Dusty Shelf* is a solid, likeable album that will definitely please Uriah Heep fans and may even win over other classic rock fans with its combination of strong songwriting and old-fashioned rock production values. ---Donald A. Guarisco, allmusic.com

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