

Pop Evil - Lipstick On The Mirror (2008)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 27 April 2014 15:44 - Last Updated Sunday, 11 November 2018 21:19

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1. "Hero" 3:32 2. "Breathe" 3:23 3. "Shinedown" 3:40 4. "100 in a 55" 4:12 5. "Somebody Like You" 3:42 6. "3 Seconds to Freedom" 3:20 7. "Another Romeo & Juliet" 4:36 8. "Stepping Stone" 3:39 9. "Jupiter in June" 3:56 10. "One More Goodbye" 3:57 11. "Ready or Not" 3:34 12. "Hard Highway" 3:38 13. "Hey Mister" 3:57 Leigh Kakaty (vocals) Tony Greve, Dave Grahs (guitar) Matt Drito (bass guitar) Dylan Allison (drums)

Imagine you are walking through the jungle that is mainstream rock. As you dodge an endless swarm of Nickelbacks and Hinder's searching for the "holy grail" of rock, you see what could very well be that grail. You pick up the Pop Evil album and dust it off. As you observe it you see a mirror with xoxo written in lipstick and a halo over the O. It is almost enough to make you drop it in disgust but you listen to it anyway, and you're pleasantly surprised. The Pop Evil album makes its first impression as your typical cock rock anthem, but behind the cover lies an album that reminds you why you listen to rock in the first place.

Pop Evil succeeds most by copying the essential rhythm of common Nickelback songs, but adding more meaning than "it's hard to steer when you're breathing in my ear, but I got both hands on the wheel while you've got both hands on my gears..." Instilled in every song is a catchy sing-along chorus filled with clichés and metaphors that stick in your head for days.

Having said all this about their songs, it seems clear that the song writing skills of Pop Evil have been established right? Wrong. Let's take what is probably the strongest song on the album 100 in a 55. The chorus is great as Kakaty exclaims, "goin' a hundred in a 55 and I don't know why I'm still alive...I still believe in this rock and roll and I pray the music's gonna save my soul, but 'till then I still believe." While the chorus is catchy and rather well written, the song is filled with lyrics such as, "too much is never enough and too little is never enough."

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In fact, the entire Lipstick on the Mirror album follows this disappointing pattern. Upon first listen, the songs sound good. Filled with rock and roll clichés that seem to explain the meaning of love, life, and fate Pop Evil makes a great first impression. After further investigation, the lyrics are nothing more than overcomplicated high school relationships gone wrong.

Now I know I just spent the last few paragraphs bashing Pop Evil and their horrible song writing, however the sound of the band is actually rather appealing. Dave Grahs gives us first-rate performance on guitar. While nothing is extremely complex, there are some impressive solos thrown in and the riffs are not at all oversimplified. The drum work from Dylan Allison is sufficient. While it doesn't show much flare or flash, it works as a good backbone for the music to flow.

All in all, Pop Evil brings a catchy debut album to the table with likable riffs and a good mix of southern rock and grunge. As a listener though, we end the album with disappointment. How could a band with this much talent and such an appealing sound have screwed this up? We are ultimately left with a desire to see or rather hear what could have been. Perhaps Pop Evil can work out all the "kinks" in a second album, but for now, Lipstick on the Mirror is just so-so. ---
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