

Today I'll be reviewing 'The Blackening' by Machine Head. I'm sure the band know of the Deep Purple album also called 'Machine Head', as it's very well known. A harmless tribute? Unfortunately, the album cover tells a different story. It's a skeleton. If someone ever called their band 'Simon Wiedemann', made an album called 'The Blackening' (a colour associated with death and evil) and its cover was a skeleton, I'd be horrified. Making things worse, the skeleton is holding a message that's almost impossible to read. In comparison, if someone goes 'I'm going to kill you' that's bad enough, but if someone mumbles phrases you can't hear properly, such as 'mmffhh ffmhhh imgonkillya mddnss' that's going to make you seriously paranoid as you don't know what to think. What I'm trying to say is, I get how Ritchie Blackmore is said to be a bit of an asshole, but you've just gone too far.

A phrase inside the CD case says 'O that they mere Wife, that they underftood.' Again, that's meaningless, yet it sounds ominous. It's surely a threat, but as it's also gibberish you have no way of reporting it. Maybe that's the reason the group uses the shouty style, rather than singing. Maybe they don't want to be easily understood, but they want to be heard just enough. Unfortunately for the band, their shouts are actually easy to decipher - they're not exactly death metal level. Think I'M crazy? The band's track 'Slandorous' proves my point exactly: 'I love you, why do I hate my father? I hate you'. They're no deep lyrics, they're meant to confuse. Here are some more disturbing lyrics for you, from their song 'Now I lay Thee Down': 'What have I done? I've killed the only one I love. How could I do this?' No you don't love Ritchie Blackmore even if you claim you're obsessed with him, YOU'RE being an asshole. To put it very mildly.

Look at the songs this band covers on the album's 2008 bonus disc: 'Alan's on Fire', 'House of Suffering', 'The Possibility of Life's Destruction'. Jeez! Ah. According to Wikipedia, the writing on the album cover says 'The Mirror Which Flatters Not'. I guess it does look a bit like that. Not as bad as a death threat, but even if someone called their group 'Simon Wiedemann' and called me ugly, I'd still be troubled. And why spell 'mirror' like 'MIRROVR'? To be creative? Isv thisv beingv creativv? No. It's poor spelling. Aha! I hate to be all over the place, but proof! Look at this quote from the band's Wikipedia page: Lyrical themes explored on The Blackening include love (oh come on), war, organized religion, anger towards Ritchie Blackmore'. Only joking, it says 'Anger towards society.' You believed me though, right?

Is the album good? Well, it has been described as 'a full-on old-skool thrash attack'. Here we go with the spelling errors, again. Are reviewers with the abilities of a school child meant to be taken seriously? Cover artists can't spell; the lyricist is either abusive or doesn't seem to understand the concept of contradiction; the music doesn't sound a bit like Deep Purple; it's impossible to say if MH are mocking the band or not, and even if they are, why??? Everything is a complete mess. The release has a ton of great reviews, but I think it's just pretty good. It's actually been compared to Master of Puppets in terms of quality. No chance. At least MoP doesn't claim to be a mushy album with lyrics such as 'Blood will follow blood. Dying time is here'.

So yeah, I think the album is alright, but I don't think it's THAT good. I think 8/10 is fair. To make the world a nicer place, I think the album should be pink (the colour of love) and it should feature a band member with a Ritchie Blackmore tattoo giving a

thumbs up. There's a chance such a comment may confuse Machine Head if they ever heard it, but I do have my reasons for saying it. Spelling a word wrong on a cover never creates a good impression, and there's hardly a bigger metal cliché than a skeleton. Maybe the band were trying to say skeletons can't spell properly. That's a weird message, and thus they really should make that clear. That's all I have to say really. Not a bad album, but not amazing. Byeeeeeee!