

I bought 'Strictly Diesel' by Spineshank from a charity shop and was pleasantly surprised when I played it, as I don't like the other album I own by the band quite so much. In fact, it's super boring. It's called 'Anger, Denial, Acceptance', and coincidentally, that's what I felt when listening to the music, just on a very, very small scale. So yeah, I'm over it now. What always quickly precedes or follows playing new music is the checking out of related reviews from AllMusic.com. The site said S.D. sounds like Korn and Deftones. Yes! Exactly! I didn't agree with Tool comparison quite so much, and if the reviewer was referring to later Tool, I would assume he winged it. In contrast, Spineshank's music is SO basic. There's no prog whatsoever. In fact you'll probably find more prog in Bruce Springsteen's two chord song 'Born in the USA'.

In the AllMusic critique, SS were praised for covering a Beatles song. I on the other hand thought it was plain weird. As far as I'm concerned, pop and metal should only be combined if the musicians know exactly what they're doing. Like ultra precise brain surgery!! SS on the other hand stick to a simple formula so much, the thought they could make such a freakish experiment work is odd, quite frankly. You know who can metal up pop songs? Deftones with their cool if mushy 'No Ordinary Love' cover. Does that mean I'd trust Def to operate on me? Maybe, yeah!

I guess there's nothing wrong with sticking with a formula if it WORKS. Iron Maiden keep going E C D E C D E, whilst Spineshank keep abusing the first three notes of the Phrygian scale. It's a good scale. Do I want to hear a whole album of it (excluding the cover song which is as un-Arabic as ever?)... kind of. But only just. I guess the Deftones influences keep me hooked. There was a hoax many years ago that said Metallica were trying to copyright the E to F chord progression, and if that was true and they succeeded, Spineshank would be screwed at first, but then they would be forced to be more creative, which is good. I guess in retaliation, the Shank could copyright their E F G / E G F / E F E G chord progressions which are very popular for other artists, too. It's just not a very nice thing to do to a person.

Now for another matter... I know what a spine is, and I know what a shank is. I'm presuming a Spineshank is a shank made from a spine. (To to be fair, it could be slang for a penis. I wouldn't know, and I don't care. Some of the slang I've found through Google is basically demented. I guess there is some creativity in such slang, but it's not for me). How do you carve a knife from someone's spine in prison, where I believe shanks are most popular? Does that sound like good security to you? Supermax? Ha. :S Let's pray spine shanks are just a figment of someone's imagination, but what kind of imagination is that?

Oh, apparently a shank can be a leg, too. Spine leg? Doesn't sound medically possible, to me. Shank can also mean 'strike a (golf) ball with the heel of a club', but that's perhaps the weirdest of the three. Spine golf??? Let's Google if that's a thing... I don't THINK so, but there are thousands of pages to go through that have the word 'spine' in it with 'golf' immediately following. All the ones seen by me seem to be harmless, but maybe there is a dodgy site out there. No. SURELY no one has swung any part of a human at a ball??? People say games like Grand Theft Auto corrupt society, but the so called 'sport' just mentioned? Why?? Why would a man ever think to himself 'I like playing golf, but it's just not macho enough for me. I need to prove to myself I'm a REAL man. How do I do that?... Hang on...' etc. I think the band should

call themselves 'Strictly Diesel'. That way they won't be outraging anybody, apart from of course, people who are trying to go green.

In conclusion, this IS an enjoyable album for the most part (as long as you ignore the perhaps dark subject matter), but despite the variety of the song titles that range from 'Shinebox' (what's that?), to 'Stovebolt' (what's that?) to '*28' (what's that mean?), almost all songs sound more or less the same. But you know what? That's fine. At least in a way. By that I mean, I listen to the same songs over and over again if I like them. Playing the same three notes over and over again on the guitars just in different orders, pushes things a little bit far, but many people are happy listening to three chord songs, aren't they? So who am I to judge? You may assume the album would just be about diesel with its title and all, but thank God it isn't. All in all, let's give the maybe surprising score of 8/10!