

'Pagan' by the Irish folk metal band Cruachan is super. It could have turned out so badly because many metal songs are about killing people and many folk songs are about merrily drinking. Merrily drinking whilst killing? Doesn't sound right, does it? Well I actually thought the fusion worked until I heard the lyric 'Some say the devil is dead, the devil is dead, the devil is dead. Some say the devil is dead and buried in Calarny (Calaghny? Killarney?) More say he rose again, more say he rose again, more say he rose again to join the British army.' How dare you. What's worst of all is that's my favourite song on the album. #conflicted.

Ok, I've been unfair to the metal genre. Its lyrics are obviously much more diverse than I let on. 'Master of Puppets' is about drugs (or possibly puppets if you use your imagination to twist the words a bit), 'The Ace of Spades' is about gambling (or possibly expert gardening) and 'Symptom of the Universe' can basically be about anything. Apparently the writer of the song doesn't even know what it's about, as he was high on drugs at the time. Oh, Ozzy. So we have merrily drinking whilst doing drugs and merrily drinking whilst gambling. That actually works, which is perhaps why Cruachan don't completely suck. But merrily drinking whilst being diseased by space somehow? (Well I guess diseased). Pretty dark. Too dark, perhaps.

Ok, I've been unfair again. Folk music is much deeper than drinking, that's obvious. It's also about insulting the English. How could we forget? Why don't the group in question sing about loving Belfast like The Original Dubliners do? Even the topic of mugging people would be better, a subject covered by TODs in their version of 'Whisky in the Jar'. What kind of people insult so much of their audience?? Can you imagine if Metallica had a grudge against England? As in 'We are Metallica, you tea drinking...' (come up with your own expletive). Ouch.

You know what? Maybe I'm being paranoid. Maybe the lyrics 'Some say the devil is dead' are completely harmless. Maybe they are short for 'some say the CHEEKY devil is dead'. But who's ever heard of a cheeky devil in an army? The idea of that is completely bizarre. 'Well done you cheeky devil, you shot him right in the face!' Ok, so that doesn't work. Handsome devil might though. Warriors are often seen as brutish and thuggish, but again, it makes far much more sense. Perhaps the best theory is Cruachan meant 'some say the lucky devil...', (you have to be lucky to rise from your grave) and for the final time, the worst, most despicable theory is the band are saying the English army is evil, as yes, that's so upsetting. To be fair though, who's ever heard of a benevolent army?

Ok! To sum up, Cruachan are a huge mystery. Maybe you should focus more on their music, rather than the words, for the sake of your own sanity. I'm being melodramatic. I am on medication for schizophrenia but I certainly didn't go crazy because of the folk-metallers. If I did, I'd be very upset with them, and wouldn't check their stuff out. (Yes, I'm bringing that subject up again, but it is my unique selling point. Ok, I'm not UNIQUE to have the condition, but you know what I mean). Maybe the album goes on a bit too long, but considering all the great stuff on it, I give it 8/10! Bye!!!