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The Treatment – Running With the Dogs

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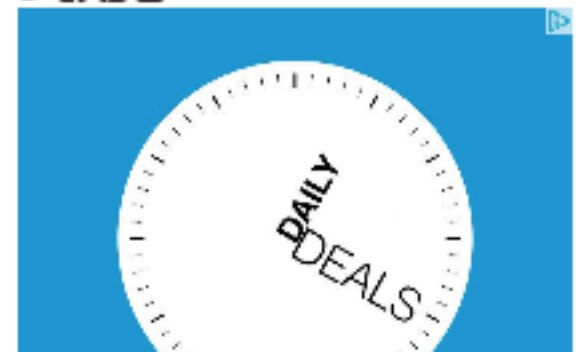
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Limited Rock

Running With the Dogs by The Treatment does no more running than is absolutely necessary. The album is the simple equation for rock 'n' roll, and that's all. It's not an intense, philosophical escape. There are no long, romantic ballads to cradle one's vulnerability. This album ends where it begins, at child-like angst sung on top of a handful of overplayed power chords, along with a tiring 4/4 beat and short-lived guitar solos that might have behooved the British five-piece to have been a bit longer.

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This album knows what it is, and it doesn't test any boundaries in regards to musical discovery in the rock department. It does do one hell of a job in ensuring that the idea of standard rock be embedded into the listener's head for eternity, however. This album is best listened to while riding a dirt bike. Listening to this music in a fixed position is about as uncomfortable and unnecessary as trying to scoop water with a fork. This is a show of power: blatant and appalling. One must be in motion.

The album's first track, "I Bleed Rock 'n' Roll," could be heard as a parody of the genre. The song digs no deeper than repeating its title a few too many times. The second song, "Drop Like A Stone," introduces moments of clarity in the form of a few Randy Rhoads-esque guitar solos, but they're cut short by unnecessary commands to "drop like a stone." Three tracks inward, "The Outlaw" momentarily obstructs the mood when it opens with church bells, a harmonica and acoustic-guitar picking. Strangely enough, the song's title is then growled, and the listener is abruptly re-introduced to the hard rock that momentarily – and somewhat awkwardly – left.

Eighth track, "Cloud Across The Sun," along with the album's last track, "Don't Get Mad Get Evil," are *Running With the Dogs'* two redeeming factors. The former is as close to a love ballad as the album gets, and the sweet-sounding melody coupled with the Axl Rose sound works. The latter's inhumane yet catchy guitar melody offsets the uncomfortable note that the singer seemed to rest on for a good portion of the album, making it a pleasant deviation to end upon.

The cover is graced by three demon dogs. They might, indeed, bleed rock 'n' roll. The edgy, misunderstood, outsider stereotype that is often associated with rock 'n' roll is fully and shamelessly embraced in this album. The band quite possibly could have taken Jack Black's advice on writing a rock song in *School of Rock*, for they seemed to have written out a list of things that pissed them off and then sung it over some chords. Maybe they put on mean faces, too.

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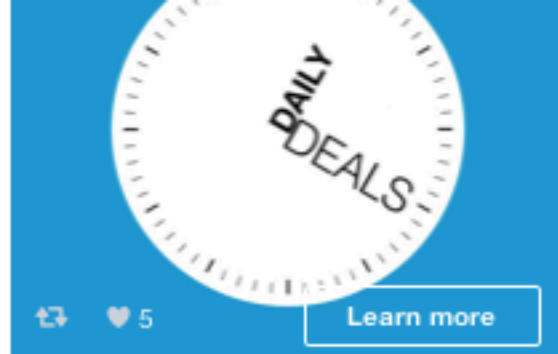
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