

Paradise Lost - Faith Divides Us - Death Unites Us (2009)

Written by bluesever

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1. *As Horizons End* 05:21 2. *I Remain* 04:09 3. *First Light* 05:00 4. *Frailty* 04:25 5. *Faith Divides Us - Death Unites Us* 04:21 6. *The Rise of Denial* 04:47 7. *Living With Scars* 04:24 8. *Last Regret* 04:24 9. *Universal Dream* 04:17 10. *In Truth* 04:50
Nick Holmes - Vocals
Stephen Edmondson - Bass Aaron Aedy - Guitars (rhythm) Gregor Mackintosh - Guitars (lead), Keyboards Peter Damin - Drums

Paradise Lost's career trajectory comes virtually full circle on 2009's *Faith Divides Us -- Death Unites Us*, an album that sees the British metal veterans resuming virtually the exact same accessible goth doom style that characterized their most commercially and critically successful albums, in essence making it sound like the would-be successor to 1995's *Draconian Times*. Of course, in the real world, that successor was 1997's *One Second*, which initiated the group's often still remarkable but widely underrated voyage into a decade's worth of electro-goth rock experiments before the start of its metallic "rehabilitation" via a tentative eponymous set in 2005 and its far more focused follow-up, *In Requiem*, a couple of years later. At this point, many of the band's long-polarized fan base probably guessed what might come next, but few really believed they'd actually come face to face with that which they had longed for over so many years...well, careful what you wish for. Just kidding. Luckily for all involved, *Faith Divides Us -- Death Unites Us* comes across not as a white flag of acquiescent apology for questionable career choices but as a proudly borne ensign backed up by a steady stream of skillfully realized anthems of sublime despondency -- "*As Horizons End*," "*First Light*," "*Last Regret*," the title cut, etc. -- too strong in their own right to be dismissed as self-plagiarism on any level. So are there exceptions to the musical templates established of old? Very few, verging on nonexistent, but they include Nick Holmes' reaching for unprecedented higher registers on "*I Remain*"; the guitar harmonics punctuating the energetic "*Frailty*"; the nearly stoner rock'n'doom of "*Universal Dream*"; and the lingering electronic fireflies hovering just beyond sight (but you know they're there) on portions of the album closer, "*In Truth*." All of which supports the level of fan excitement surrounding *Faith Divides Us -- Death Unites Us* and asks the next question: could a full-fledged devolution into the primal dirge of the band's formative death/doom origins be next? Don't hold your breath, but stranger things have happened throughout Paradise Lost's increasingly intriguing career. --- Eduardo Rivadavia, allmusic.com

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