



DOWN
**DOWN III:
OVER THE UNDER**
(ROADRUNNER)
KKKKK

NEW ORLEANS' FAVOURITE SONS SHINE ON LONG-AWAITED RETURN

PHIL ANSELMO – vocals. Pepper Keenan – guitar. Rex Brown – bass. Kirk Windstein – guitar. Jimmy Bower – drums.

With such a stellar line-up the above rating may appear somewhat predictable, but consider this before you cast judgement. If it looks so impressive on paper, then imagine how good it *sounds*. Their first release in over five years, Down III is the whiskey-reeking breath of fresh air that rock and roll has been craving ever since. From the explosive opening riff of 3 Suns 1 Star, through the lumbering grooves of I Scream and on to the soaring eight-minute epic Nothing In Return (Walk Away), each track is a Sabbath-worshipping, Moonshine-guzzling triumph. Some of the riffs on display are so filthy that you'll likely need to clean your nails after the first spin, while Anselmo's voice appears to be in its best shape for years.

But what stands out most is that despite a turbulent few years, a time that's seen murder and destruction affect the band's lives at the most personal of levels, there's a strange optimism present. Not least in the 'LSD ain't what it used to be' refrain of N.O.D., one that suggests that after years of fucking himself up Anselmo is at last on the mend.

Down may be a band whose uniqueness comes with a sense of occasion, but if they can produce this type of form each and every

time then waiting five weeks for Down IV will be torture, let alone five years.

DOWNLOAD: N.O.D., I Scream.
FOR FANS OF: Black Sabbath, Corrosion Of Conformity.

RYAN BIRD

Back track

3 KILLER SONGS FROM DOWN'S CATALOGUE

TEMPTATION'S WINGS (NOLA, 1995)

BURY ME IN SMOKE (NOLA, 1995)

LYSERGIC FUNERAL PROCESSION (Il: A Bustle In Your Hedgerow, 2002)