

Mp3 Brent Kirby And The Flashing 12's - The Mean Days



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"Brent Kirby and The Flashing 12's scrape the landscape of blue collar America, delivering a triumphant collection of songs that describe the beauty and heartbreak of the moments when we realize life is about to change." 10 MP3 Songs ROCK: Americana, ROCK: Roots Rock Details: "Somehow wishes, I could miss this, the Mean Days..." On the title track to Brent Kirby and The Flashing 12's new CD, "The Mean Days", Brent sings that line with the conviction of somebody who takes pleasure in the hard times. Brent describes, 'The Mean Days' are the days that you feel the push and pull of life. You could be talking about present day society, your family or significant other, about your money and the troubles and stresses that brings, working a job you don't want to, or a bunch of heavy things that all of us deal with in life. Feeling that struggle within yourself, and the decisions that we make in those moments, define us as individuals." Kirby is no stranger to that struggle. After years of juggling the duties of the "real job" versus the not so financially secure "musician" job, he finally made a decision to place his focus and energy on music full time. As Brent puts it, "I am truly now the poor man's musician." Brent grew up in a small town called Oconomowoc in southeastern Wisconsin. He played the drums and started playing in bars when he was thirteen years old. "I remember at that age, making a conscious decision that I was going to do something with music." He proceeded to perform with every group he could, playing and rehearsing sometimes six times a week. This started the juggling routine of balancing his musical interests with the reality of the "real job" that carried over into his adult life. Throughout college, Brent performed in various bands throughout Wisconsin, playing drums and percussion, even at one point, playing in five bands at once. It was then that Brent finally picked up a guitar and started learning some chords, penning some lyrics, and proceeded to write songs. "I was surrounded by local songwriters and bands, and you just couldn't help but to be influenced by them, all of them wrote such incredible songs." Needing an outlet for his new

songs, Brent formed bands that were short-lived, recording five to ten songs, playing one gig, and moving on to the next one. Brent moved to St. Louis, where he soaked up the vibrant Americana scene. Despite working two jobs at sixty hours plus a week, he still found time to write songs. After a few one off gigs, an old friend from college asked Brent if he wanted to record some of his current material in Nashville, where he was working as a recording engineer. A collection of demos were recorded with studio musicians, the band Mavis was formed, and Nashville had a brand new resident with a guitar. Mavis worked with Peter Coleman (The Knack, Blondie, Pat Benetar, Steve Earle, Tom Petty), who mixed their CD "Turn Around", released in 2000. Soon after the CD was released, the all too common "musical differences" set in, and Brent moved for a short stay in Chicago for a new source of inspiration. In 2001, Brent arrived in Cleveland, where he again started to play live. Within six months, he was nominated for Best Male Singer Songwriter by The Free Times, landed opening slots for artists such as Jorma Kakounen, Michael Stanley, Ellis Paul, American Minor, Edwin McCain, Will Hoge, and started to work the Northeast Ohio club circuit. Brent assembled a group of musicians and set out to record some newly penned songs at C-Town sound, where Brent realized a musical partnership with studio engineer John Guggenheim. After some member changes, the newly anointed "Flashing 12's", consisting of Cleveland musical veterans Greg Hido, Paul Lewis, and Jerry Buescher, delivered ten songs that perfectly define a band who have something passionate to present. "Walk All Over Those Streets" and "Crescent Beach" display the youthful exuberance of possibility, where songs like "The Mean Days", and "Torn Hearts, Broken Bones" breathe the beauty of a melancholy moment. There is a story being told within the bodies of these songs that always seem to have a survival instinct, a glimmer of hope. The commitment that is put forth from track to track makes it evident that this is a collection of songs from a band that has nothing to lose and everything to gain. Whether with The Flashing 12's or solo acoustic, Brent's charismatic emotional delivery of his storyteller prose displays a representation of his Midwest roots. Make no mistake; the songs of "The Mean Days" are truly a slice of Americana, hinting towards a universal understanding that everyone can relate to. "There is a beauty in the struggle, the transformation, the movement of one place to the next." Brent states, "We all have good days and bad ones, and we need one to appreciate the other. 'The Mean Days' represent that struggle of getting from one to the other. It's exactly where I am."

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