

The smell of fire weighs on the stale air. The birds have fallen silent. A shiver runs through the naked skeletons of the trees. The dead river meanders aimlessly. As the sun darkens, the moon is bereft of its light. The land grows weary amidst the shadows grey, and hearts are relieved for they welcome darkness; they welcome our kingdom.

Belgium's KINGDOM, featuring members of AMENRA and BLACK HEART REBELLION have started serving masses with their debut full-album; separating themselves from false prophets. "Hemeltraan" is a slow, mature work of bleak drones, epic doom and fuzzy sludge in five movements, which slowly draws listeners into an unfolding landscape of broken imagery and half-remembered screams from the past that burrow deep into the soul. Both the heavy and the droning parts serve as an audible fog that slowly creeps around and attacks your senses. Through the repetition of sludgy riffs built on sustained chords and eerie chanting, "Hemeltraan" hypnotizes its prey and conveys a brooding feeling of unease.

KINGDOM create long builds that grab the listener by the throat, releasing them with a tidal wave riff that flood the mind with visions of mystery and eternal torment, repenting for the sins of mankind. With opener "Altema", KINGDOM slowly descends into a dark and cold atmosphere, and once there churning guitars, religious-like chanting and desolate drums collide into a lush mesmerizing eruption of tortured screaming and conjuring riffs. Once "Elude" fades out it becomes clear that "Hemeltraan" is a work of disturbing beauty and desperation, tension and apprehension, mystery and bipolarity.

For their first official release on Hypertension Records, KINGDOM set out to document their aural vision and found solace in the helping hands of Hein Devos (HITCH) who recorded the five tracks at The Strip in Kortrijk, Belgium. For the final touch, mixing and mastering was done by Billy Anderson (NEUROISIS, OM, SLEEP,... ) who like no other could grab the huge slabs of sound and densely layer them into a heavy, tense world of climactic cacophony.

"Hemeltraan" is immense yet quiet, dark yet hopeful, pure yet doctrinal, the sum is but an echo of it parts, inviting the listener to subconsciously abandon all hope. Now it's too late to pray...