



TIL THE CASKET DROPS

**A1. Freedom • A2. Popular Demand (Popeyes) (feat. Cam'ron & Pharrell) • A3. Kinda Like A Big Deal (feat. Kanye West)
A4. Showing Out (feat. Yo Gotti) • A5. I'm Good (feat. Pharrell) • A6. There Was A Murder**

**B1. Door Man • B2. Never Will It Stop (feat. Ab Liva) • B3. All Eyes On Me (feat. Keri Hilson)
B4. Counseling (feat. Nicole Hurst) • B5. Champion • B6. Footsteps • B7. Life Change**

The contemporary realm of hip hop music can be seen as polarized between two sides; mainstream versus underground, industry versus independent, at a base level boiled down to catchy sounds & infective hooks over higher quality lyrical content. These elements don't need to be mutually exclusive, but these days it's rare to find an act that can please all sides of the discussion. Clipse are one of the few groups that successfully and consistently caters to both sides of rap's splintered psyche, simultaneously serving the scene with upbeat bangers that get the club poppin' & subwoofers rattlin' while crafting clever quotable compositions deserving of repeated headphone submersions. Though their preceding official albums *Lord Willin'* (2002) & *Hell Hath No Fury* (2006) made bigger splashes commercially, 2009's *Til The Casket Drops* is surely no slouch, a gem which deserves to be revisited with fresh ears – good thing *Get On Down* has given it the proper treatment it deserves with its first-ever vinyl pressing!

Til The Casket Drops was a departure from the duo of Malice & Pusha T's previous works in that it was their first LP not completely produced by The Neptunes. However, the celebrated team who brought us 'Grinding' & 'Mr. Me Too' still helmed 8 of the album's 13 tracks, thus dominating the soundscapes and aesthetic of the album anyway. With the remaining beats handled by Hitmen Sean C & LV (Jay-Z, Big Pun, Ghostface) and Aftermath's DJ Khalil (Kendrick Lamar, Aloe Blacc, Eminem) clearly Clipse stock hadn't lowered in the game. While boasting notable vocal features from Kanye West, Pharrell, Cam'ron, Keri Hilson, Yo Gotti & their Re-Up Gang affiliate Ab-Liva, *Casket Drops* leaves ample space for the core emcee duo of Pusha & Malice to shine in the spotlight, with verses revolving around each other succinctly in-synch and bonded by an exceptional creative rhythm only biological brothers could share.

Clipse have always delighted in dualities, juxtapositions and contradictions, unabashedly celebrating the capitalistic lifestyle and the grind as the kings of 'coke-rap', while taking hard looks at society's mores and those of their own individual journeys. We hear Malice's eventual transition to *No Malice* taking form on this album as he found religion, warning others who might follow in his path on 'Footsteps': "don't let my wrongs give you the right of way/ to emulate my past escaping the law's grasp" while refusing to be pinned down in one lane: "it weights on my conscience and I hate conscious rap". Meanwhile Pusha T continues his lyrical ascent into the King Push persona with bars like "pompous motherfucker, look what them jewels made me/ I'm only finding comfort in knowing you can't replace me/ What a thing to say, but what am I to do/ I'm role-playing a conscious nigga and true is true/ Cocaine aside, all of the bloggers behaved/ My critics finally have a verse of mine to jerk off to" decisively on album opener "Freedom".

Since it dropped, the Clipse have stated that *Casket...* is their final album together while subsequently alluding to the possibility of an eventual reunion. Only time will tell, but until then it's time to re-celebrate one of hip hop's most dynamic duos by hearing *Til The Casket Drops* in a whole new light with its long-overdue, first time on vinyl pressing via *Get On Down* featuring all 13 original tracks on wax and cover art by the legendary KAWS! It's kinda like a big deal...



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