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The artists on Shark Attack Music's "3.5eps" compilation embrace the subtleties of sound more regularly associated with UK-based artists and come to the surface with an absolute treasure. The release begins with the ethereal ambience of Charlene's "Look for the Line" before HelloAttack's more melodically moody "D" follows, establishing a diverse tone for the collection. With four contributors on board, the influences run the gamut from the Mojave 3-like acoustic prettiness of Lockgroove's "All Caught Up" to the smoky Parisian feel of Compass's "Skyscraper" (delivered in French). On "Low Down," Charlene establishes a groove that would not be out of place alongside the quieter offerings of Super Furry Animals, while Compass's "Beth" is reminiscent of Joseph Arthur's work with sound textures.

- Tom Kiely January 25, 2002

It's been too long since we last heard from planet Lockgroove, but they make up for lost time with some help from an extended family on the SharkAttack! label/collective's album-length four-band compilation 3.5 eps. Lockgroove's twin brothers, Ryan and Martin Rex, return with what might be their best material yet: the elephant fog has lifted somewhat, and their blissfully melancholic pop side predominates on three new feedback-drenched rainy-day dispatches from the tattered remnants of daydream nation. Another Rex brother, John, shows up in Charlene, whose squalling two-chord drug pop comes from the Jesus and Mary Chain school of Velvet Underground worship - think Black Rebel Motorcycle Club with a minor in Medicine and My Bloody Valentine. Lockgroove's David S. Goodman unveils his solo project Compass, in which he cloaks his Syd Barrett folkisms in comforting algorithmic bleeps from hallucinating mainframes. And the instrumental quintet HelloAttack are happy to erect somber, elegiac cathedrals around gently weeping slide guitars, but they're even more ecstatic when they're tearing the whole thing down in a rush of oncoming traffic noise.

- Carly Carioli January 29, 2002

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For a compilation record, this is a surprisingly cohesive affair; the four artists represented here share an affinity for shoegazery fuzzy guitars and deadpan vocals. That can lend itself to a sort of sameness -- indeed, it's difficult to tell the bands apart if you're not studying the track listing -- but the mix of dreamy, spare instrumental passages with some really charming and catchy pop songs makes up for whatever few complaints that might engender. Most notable are the contributions from Compass, the solo project of David S. Goodman, whose songs juxtapose lo-fi singer-guitarist fare with bright synths, samples, and the occasional drum machine. His "Skyscraper" is a densely arranged, ridiculously danceable four minutes of pop glee. The other bands involved aren't too shabby, either. Charlene provides a few dark, moody songs that still manage singalong choruses, and the more acoustic Lockgroove have a sort of mellow driving quality and a breathy singer that could make them the Sea and Cake's edgier younger brothers. Fourth band HelloAttack's instrumentals can go on a few minutes too long, but they can be easily overlooked in favor of the creamy pop goodness that surrounds them. Tasty.

-- Mandy Shekleton April 8, 2002