

Marilyn Manson – Born Villain (2012)

Written by bluesever

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01 – Hey, Cruel World [play](#) 02 – No Reflection 03 – Pistol Whipped 04 – Overneath the Path of Misery 05 – Slo-Mo-Tion 06 – Gardner 07 – Flowers Of Evil 08 – Children Of Chain 09 – Disengaged 10 – Lay Down Your Goddamn Arms 11 – Murderers Are Getting Prettier Every Day 12 – Born Villain 13 – Breaking the Same Old Ground 14 – You're So Vain 15 - No Reflection (Radio Edit) [play](#) Musicians: Marilyn Manson – vocals, lyrics, guitars Twiggy – guitars, bass guitar, keyboards Chris Vrenna – keyboards, synthesizers, programming, percussion Fred Sablan – bass guitar, guitars Jason Sutter – live drums on the tour for Born Villain, drums (14)

Marilyn Manson has always done well playing the tragic hero - or the sacrificial lamb. So it seems appropriate to quote Macbeth near the beginning of "Born Villain," the shock-rocker's first new album in three years. "This is a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury," he sings in the song "Overneath the Path of Misery." It fits so well and there's certainly plenty of that here. But "Born Villain" finds a seemingly refreshed and clear-minded Manson and his band poring through a diverse set of moods and styles in songs that cut a little deeper than the deliberate provocation of many of his previous works. The raw and often stripped-down set is built on sophisticated dynamics, while references to the Stooges ("The Gardener"), glam rock ("Slo-Mo-Tion") and even blues ("Lay Down Your Goddamn Arms") accent the pulsing industrial undercurrent and foreboding spookiness that are Manson's stock in trade. He's not just, as the song says, "Breaking the Same Old Ground." And the bonus track cover of Carly Simon's "You're So Vain" with Johnny Depp is a welcome dose of cacophonous camp. --- billboard.com

With their eighth studio album, Born Villain, Marilyn Manson return from the depths of their mid-2000s limbo with almost an hour of the type of evil industrial and glam-infused metal they

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made their name on in their earliest days. While the band's blazingly controversial public profile died down tremendously since their late-'90s heyday, legions of devoted fans followed them through the next decade's bevy of changes. The departure of founding member Twiggy Ramirez coincided with a few of the band's weakest albums, and even his return to the fold on 2009's *The High End of Low* couldn't redeem a substandard record from what seemed like a flailing band past its prime. *Born Villain* sheds some of the more introspective leanings of prior offerings and accentuates all the throbbing rhythms, metallic guitars, and bilious disgust that defined the band's best work. Lead single "No Reflection" screams "comeback," with Manson channeling a Sisters of Mercy vocal over the sinister pulse of the verses before huge choruses explode in darkly catchy bursts. "Children of Cain" draws again on the later-period Bowie influence that defined much of the band's glammy *Mechanical Animals* album, and an unlisted cover of Carly Simon's "You're So Vain" turns the FM staple into a gruesomely churning romp. Moments like these are the aural equivalent of a knowing smirk from the band, acknowledging that even the princes of darkness might have a lighter side. "Lay Down Your Goddamn Arms" finds the band working in a curiously grunge-tinged mode, with sludgy riffs meeting huge distortedly melodic choruses that would fit in nicely with Badmotorfinger-era Soundgarden. All of these songs find Manson himself in typically depraved form, with lyrical content as sexually, morally, and socially devious as it's been since 2000's devilish *Holy Wood (In the Shadow of the Valley of Death)*. "Pistol Whipped" tells a tale in great detail of a sadomasochistic relationship and song titles like "Murderers Are Getting Prettier Every Day" speak for themselves. Even while *Born Villain* is a return to form for the band, the album becomes tedious at right about the halfway mark. The songs are overly long and all rely on similar dynamics to propel their crunchy angst. Though sounding inspired and sonically rejuvenated in its best moments, as the album wears on one gets the sense of a band trying a little too hard to revisit its former glory. Without remaking "The Beautiful People," there's still a feeling that they're reaching to remember how to make a Marilyn Manson record and put the purgatory of their past few efforts behind them. All told, *Born Villain* is as valiant and exciting an effort as the group has come up with in years. While not reaching the dizzying heights of Marilyn Manson's early material, it suggests a band getting its legs back after a long period out to sea, and could lead the way to even brighter future wickedness. ---Fred Thomas, AllMusic Review

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