

Black Sabbath - Born Again (1983)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Trashed* (4:15)
2. *Stonehenge* (1:58)
3. *Disturbing The Priest* (5:48)
4. *The Dark* (0:48)
5. *Zero The Hero* (7:35)
6. *Digital Bitch* (3:38)
7. *Born Again* (6:35)
8. *Hot Line* (4:50)
9. *Keep It Warm* (5:39)

Musicians: Ian Gillan – vocals Tony Iommi – guitar, flute Geoff Nicholls – keyboards Geezer Butler – bass guitar Bill Ward – drums

The idea sure looked good on paper, but when former Deep Purple frontman Ian Gillan joined Black Sabbath for 1983's dreadful *Born Again* album, the grim reality was that Gillan's bluesy vocal style and oftentimes humorous lyrics were completely incompatible with the lords of doom and gloom. Widely deemed the band's creative nadir (although a few later efforts like *Cross Purposes* and *Forbidden* give it a run for its money), *Born Again* also featured one of the worst album covers ever (it's been voted!), and the subsequent world tour was so troubled and tragicomic that the band's Stonehenge stage set wound up serving as inspiration for the ultimate rock & roll spoof movie, *This Is Spinal Tap*, when it was discovered to be too large to fit inside most venues! *Born Again*'s equally atrocious "production" leaves one with the distinct impression that, in a misguided attempt to record the heaviest album ever, Black Sabbath came away with the muddiest instead. Among the smoking ruins that pass for its songs, one might find it possible to appreciate Gillan's trademarked double entendres on "Disturbing the Priest," pick out a decent melody within the messy title track, and get down to some mercifully straightforward headbanging with "Digital Bitch" and the album's lone classic, "Trashed." But the remaining detritus, composed of embarrassing numbers like "Zero the Hero," "Hot Line," and "Keep It Warm" and pointless sound effect interludes "Stonehenge" and "The Dark," is simply beyond painful. By comparison, even the barely-recognizable-as-Sabbath material found on

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1986's belated comeback, Seventh Star -- originally planned as a Tony Iommi solo effort, to be fair -- sounds pretty damn good. But by then, Black Sabbath's greatly anticipated association with Ian Gillan had gone down as one of heavy metal's all-time greatest disappointments, and nearly killed the genre's founding fathers in the process. ---Eduardo Rivadavia, AllMusic Review

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