

## Torian - Dawn (2012)

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1. *Run Of The River (Overture)* (1:24) 2. *Grateful* (4:32) 3. *Soul Desert Asylum* (4:34) 4. *Thunder Battalions* (4:33) 5. *Lost Command* (6:49) 6. *Oceans* (5:04) 7. *Fall Of The Golden Towers* (4:41) 8. *Anthem To Ignorance (Instr.)* (1:56) 9. *Lords Of Babylon* (5:17) 10. *Fires Beyond The Sun* (5:28) 11. *Wounded (Instr.)* (1:36) 12. *Dawn* (16:30) Musicians: Marc Hohlweck - vocals Carl Delius - guitars Alexander Thielmann - lead guitars Bengt Kunze - bass Manuel Gonstalla – drums.

Ever since Helloween made a statement with *Walls of Jericho* in the fabled days of 1985, Germany became synonymous with power metal. While certain countries in Scandinavia made sizeable inroads into claiming the style for their own, German power metal scene remains a fertile ground for bands steeled in the best tradition of the genre yet breathing new life into its often imitative formula. Torian is the latest such band, and while their third full-length release *Dawn* may not be groundbreaking, it incorporates enough unique ideas to set it apart from the pack.

While Torian relies on tried-and-true elements of power metal such as prominent melodies, choir vocals, and lyrics rooted in fantasy, they are not afraid to take chances with forays into much more extreme genres. After more traditional-sounding “Grateful”, the album takes a turn for heavier territory. “Soul Desert Asylum” is chock-full of blast beats and riffing straight out of Jon Schaffer’s book, while “Thunder Battalions” and “Lost Command” are muscular, energetic, and uncompromising. “Lords of Babylon” surges forth with its thrash-infused energy, often channeling Kreator and Slayer in the verses, and even more traditional power metal of “Fall of the Golden Towers” and “Fires Beyond the Sun” retains heavier edge usually missing in much power metal.

Even when the band slows down the tempo, as on “Oceans”, they come across closer to Angel Dust’s more pensive moments than to Bon Jovi type of balladry. It all comes together on an epic, sixteen-minute long title track, which covers the entire gamut of Torian’s sound, from melodic and moody sections to majestic power metal, thrash riffing worthy of any mosh pit, and soloing that remains true to the genre standard. Marc Hohlweck has a raspier voice than is

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typical for the genre, not too far off from Angel Dust's Dirk Thurisch, while maintaining his ability to carry a melody. He may not be an operatic singer in the Michael Kiske or Timo Kotipelto mold, but his less technical approach is an asset to the music, where a more polished vocalist might have compromised the aggression of "Dawn". At times, Torian almost sounds like a much rawer take on what Dragonforce tries to accomplish, but with more focus on aggression as opposed to virtuoso playing. This kind of metal was not meant to be overproduced and slick, but dirty and raw, the kind of power metal that one would raise a tankard to while trying to stage-dive into a mosh pit. For that, Torian delivers.

There are several rough spots on Dawn, but even those add to the albums charm. On several songs, extreme metal influences appear tacked on and unnecessary, however, those moments are few and far between. While for the most part the songs are well written, the record lacks a true stand-out track that sticks in one's head long after it is done playing. "Thunder Battalions" is the closest Torian comes to writing such a song, and even that is a bit on simplistic side. These issues prevent Dawn from being a top-tier release, although it is still a very enjoyable album showcasing the band's potential to break out of the shadow cast by better known acts, and to carve a name for themselves. If Torian continues on the path of crafting aggressive power metal with some extreme metal elements, they may be well on their way to joining the genre elites by their next album or two. --- themetalreview.com

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