

Lorien [Spain] - From The Forest To The Havens (2005)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Return From The Abyss* 3:36 2 *Light Of Valinor* 3:15 3 *Now I Ask Myself* 4:22 4 *Graceful Pixies* 3:35 5 *Light Is Only Light* 3:50 6 *You Let Me Down* 3:55 7 *Breath Of Salvation* 4:11 8 *Fire Of Life* 3:32 9 *I Can't Find Your Home* 5:03 10 *Outro* 2:01 Bass – David Ruiz Drums – Dani Ruiz Guest, Soprano Vocals – Elena Martinell (tracks: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7) Keyboards – Jaume Corvera Lead Guitar, Rhythm Guitar – David Tordera Lead Vocals, Backing Vocals – Jordi Tordera Rhythm Guitar, Lead Guitar – Josep Tordera

Lorien are something of a dark horse in the Spanish melodic power metal scene, playing a similar style to elder Spanish speed metal mainstays Dark Moor, and delving to lyrical subjects of a similar nature to many other established acts who have been in the scene longer. They avoid being too similar to many bands by avoiding use of symphonic sounds, and on their debut successfully married some folksy sounding instrumentation with keyboard sounds reminiscent of Swedish and Finnish power metal acts like Stratovarius and Nightwish.

“From the Forest to the Havens” takes a slightly different approach from the debut and tries to move away from the somewhat wintry sounding Nightwish oriented half-ballads and concentrate more on guitar and riff oriented epic speed metal. Of course they rely on the string and harp sounds on many occasions to preface their songs, but there is a noticeable decrease in the ballad elements from the last album. A good analogy would be that the band has shifted towards a sound similar to Fairyland’s “Of Wars in Osyrhia” (minus the orchestra sounds) rather than Dark Moor’s “Shadowland”.

The songs have become a little shorter and compact, but still maintain that rapid change in feel approach that is peculiar to the epic style. “Now I ask myself” most resembles that mix of slower sections that are immediately followed by quick build ups in tempo and climaxing at a high speed gallop complete with all the majestic lead keyboard and guitar trimmings. “Light of

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Valinor" also exhibits similar traits, but with an even catchier chorus and some brilliant Tolkki/Johanssen style lead guitar and keyboard extras straight out of the Episode era. The band gives their best at an epic overture as an epilogue in "Outro", which features some nice female operatic singing and screams Rhapsody worship all over.

Although the songwriting has seen some positive development, the one part of this album that struck me as being amazing is all of the damned fancy bass playing on here. I have no idea how the hell Jordi Tordera was able to sing lead vocals and play all of those damned bass fill-ins at the same time, but I'm assuming that if the band played any shows that he must have pulled it off. Picture Black Sabbath, but instead have Geezer Butler doing the lead vocals in every single song. And for you bass solo enthusiasts out there who love to hear the instrument get shredded up the way a guitar normally does, check out the intro to "Fire of Life"; we're talking something of a similar character to the bass solo on "Eagle Fly Free".

Unfortunately after this the band decided to call it quits soon after this and most of the members ended up in the now active Spanish power metal band "Nivaria", which I presume play a fairly similar variant on the genre. Unfortunately this has resulted in Jordi, the person who's bass work and vocals gives this band it's one element of uniqueness, is essentially out of commission. Personally, I hope he either eventually reforms this group with a new line-up or starts up a similar project so he can keep honing his bass craft, he might give Marcus Grosskopf and Steve Harris a good run for their money. What is doubly unfortunate is that to this day I can't find a CD version of this album anywhere, so if you have one and you don't feel particularly attached to it, contact me ASAP. Oh, and I almost forgot, if you like what you hear in this review, there are several sites where you can download the album for a reasonable price, with all the lyrics and album art included. ---hells_unicorn, metal-archives.com

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