

ROYAL BLOOD



How Did We Get So Dark?

Album by Royal Blood

Review by Ryland Owens

About the Band

Royal Blood is an English rock band formed in England, Brighton in 2013. The band's music is reminiscent of blues/hard rock. Royal Blood consists of two members; **Mike Kerr** as the vocalist and bass player and **Ben Thatcher** as the band's drummer.

One unique factor that contributes to the band's style is that they use several effects pedals while recording and performing live, allowing the bass to sound like a standard guitar when necessary. Their debut album was released on August 22nd 2014 titled simply as "Royal Blood" and their second album, "How Did We Get So Dark?" followed on June 16th 2017

As previously stated, "How Did We Get So Dark?" was Royal Blood's second album to be released. Although not quite as well received as their first album, with scores averaging roughly 4.5/5 stars, this album was still met as well by many reviewers and fans, with views averaging roughly 4/5 stars. One criticism that critics had was, while the songwriting and production were very well done, the band didn't really progress creatively since their first album. That being said it peaked at number one on the UK Albums, UK Rock & Metal Albums, and the Scottish Albums charts.



Debut Album



How Did We Get So Dark?

Notable tracks on the album

[How Did We Get So Dark?](#)

The opening track on “How Did We Get So Dark?” is also titled as How Did We Get So Dark?. Opening into a simple drum rock beat, these are quickly followed by the bass and vocals. This isn’t the strongest song of the entire album but I felt it was worth talking about because it’s the opening track and it is a fun song to listen to every once in a while. The theme of the song is, understandably, rather dark and not so subtly introduces the theme that the rest of the album will follow suite.



[Hook, Line, and Sinker](#)

Hook, Line and Sinker opens with an explosive guitar and drums piece with booming sound, before transitioning into an upbeat, verse tune. In the verse, the lyrics sink together remarkably well; the line “then she drags me by one finger, to her lips hook, line and sinker, honey I’m a sucker when you linger” is a personal favourite. Now for all of this praise, there are some downfalls. The chorus isn’t anything to rave about, although it does admittedly work well enough among the rest of the song. It is primarily the exceptional incorporation of the melody and the lyrics, alongside that spectacular principal riff, that makes this single a stimulating new song from Royal Blood’s second outing. Hook, Line and Sinker is one of the ‘killer’ tracks among some of the other more ‘filler’ tracks.

Lights Out

This is one of my absolute favorite songs from the duo, this is the song that introduced me to the band in the first place. Kicking off with a raging bass guitar the duo jump into a driven start with the growling bass and grooving beat. When the chorus kicks in, things turn up a notch as the bass becomes powerful and the drums crash. The bass guitar changes up the riff, but it all gets a bit more interesting when the bass solo kicks in. A brief drum break precedes it before the solo dramatically comes crashing in, at the end crashing back into the epic chorus. One thing that's not often talked when reviewing songs are music videos. It's introduced with the band in the middle of a white room, but as the chorus kicks in, dozens of people are seen swimming in the ceiling. They disappear as the verse comes back in, but more women are seen swimming on every surface of the room, before the entire room is filled with swimmers. The strobing red light gives a dark underlying tone to the room in which Mike Kerr plays his solo as the swimmers dance around him. It's both mind bending and reality bending at the same time.



[She's Creeping](#)

This next pick on the list isn't as popular as some of the others on so far, nor is it as universally liked, however it's one of my personal favorites from the album. The song launches right into it with a rather simple, but catchy, guitar riff along with raw vocals and backup drums. This track is rather haunting compared to many of their other songs. That being said, it still fits into their unique sound that they are definitely beginning to develop. Nearing the end of the track are some ghostly backup vocals, whispers almost, that really tie together the theme and atmosphere of the song. The simplistic style of the instrumentation, the catchy chorus, and the higher ranged notes hit during this song really make it stand out compared to their other tracks.

[Sleep](#)

The final track on the album "Sleep" is one that I'm rather on the fence about. Technically, I think it's a good song. Personally, I'm not the biggest fan but I won't let that impact the review of the song. The vocals and lyrics that introduce the song, along with the guitar, are drawn out and perfectly executed. They fit together very well and the song flows flawlessly when the drums are added into the mix with a simple starting beat. The song crescendos into a beautiful blend of sounds and then decrescendos back to the beginning and follows this pattern throughout the song. If this song were to be thrown into the middle of the album I think many people would probably skip over it. As a closing track though, it fits in well enough and closes the entire album with a solid guitar strum that echoes into nothingness.



[I Only Lie When I Love You](#)

With the release of their new single, “I Only Lie When I Love You.” Reaching No. 1 on the Rock Radio airplay charts, this victory marks the third time in the band’s career that they made it to the top. The track fills any room with an electric energy the moment the songs begins. “I Only Lie When I Love You” is marked by passionate vocals, a beat to dance to, and a guitar part that resonates with the soul. There’s a sense of intensity that’s hard to get enough of, which makes sense given the song’s dark topic. Toxic relationships, while clearly bad for one’s health, often have an addictive quality to them that’s hard to explain. “I Only Lie When I Love You” captures this essence not only through its haunting melody, but also through its vivid lyrics that paint such a raw image of two lovers who drive each other to the edge.



Overall thoughts

I really enjoyed this album relative to their first album but there's definitely room for improvement. I feel they need to experiment a bit more and stretch out of their comfort zones more than they have before. Hopefully with their third album they will hit their stride, just as many great artists have done in the past. I would definitely recommend this album to friends or at the very least recommend "Lights Out" as I think that would probably be the majority of people would enjoy the most. As much as their bass, guitar, and drums, are all while and good it gets tiring after a certain point. Instrumental experimentation is the #1 thing I'd like to see from the duo next time.

Rating: 8.5/10

