

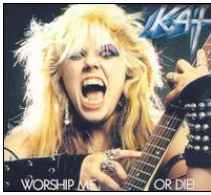


THE GREAT KAT

Worship Me Or Die! Reissue

Metal Mind Productions

Ray Van Horn, Jr.



Not even the femme braggadocio of the immortal Wendy O. Williams could prepare metalheads for what came our way in 1987, a Julliard graduate with one hell of an attitude and faster fingers and wrist speed than even Vinnie Vincent, the former Kiss shredder who scorched the shit out of his self-titled *Vinnie Vincent Invasion* album the year prior. Poor Vinnie suddenly had a rival for shredding supremacy and it came in the form of The Great Kat, a sinfully gifted female axe handler declaring herself God... Not Goddess, but *God*.

Most people have misappropriated The Great Kat as a guitar-slinging FemiNazi with a swelled head, but they only got a portion of the former correct. In declaring herself God, Kat was taking on all of the dickswinging and hopeless posturing of her male counterparts in the eighties with nutty, headstrong insults and sizzling guitar throwdowns to back them up. While it took The Great Kat until the standout *Beethoven On Speed* album in 1990 to truly prove her worth to the metal world, her debut album *Worship Me Or Die!* is still worth a listen to hear her introductory shredding skills, despite the album being a headache otherwise. With insipid lyrics (such as “Ashes to Dust,” “Kat Possessed” or “Kill the Mothers”) and Kat forcing her backup band to eat her dust to the point of amateurishness on their part, *Worship Me Or Die!* is just plain stupid, a misfired attempt to make a double-timed neoclassical PLASMATICS album that is, regardless, a spotlight nugget of metal for Kat’s ferocious fretwork alone. When she yells “Get ready for hyperspeed!” on “Speed Death,” Kat isn’t fucking around; while the song is clunky overall and Kat’s shrieks are over-the-top, just have a go with those chops of hers *for crying out loud...*

Simply put, *Worship Me Or Die!* wouldn’t be a noteworthy artifact if similarly conceived by anyone of lesser prowess. Fortunately, The Great Kat has far exceeded the boorish insanity of *Worship Me Or Die!* to the point that many people “get” her now. Kat deserves credit for her chutzpah and willingness to stand up against the wagging johnsons that tried to keep her down beneath their sweaty sacs. So long as you recognize this and recognize the fact that *Beethoven On Speed* was a minor transitional album in the evolution of grind and neoclassical metal, then we can forgive The Great Kat for her silly inauguration. Everyone has their humble beginnings; or in Kat’s case...

- Ray Van Horn Jr.