

Great White - Great White (1984)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 01 August 2017 14:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 01 April 2018 22:01

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01. *Out Of The Night* - 2:59 02. *Stick It* - 3:57 03. *Substitute* - 4:23 04. *Bad Boys* - 4:20 05. *On Your Knees* - 3:49 06. *Streetkiller* - 3:58 07. *No Better Than Hell* - 4:06 08. *Hold On* - 4:12 09. *Nightmares* - 3:17 10. *Dead End* - 3:34 Mark Kendall - guitar, backing vocals Lorne Black - bass, backing vocals Gary Holland - drums, backing vocals + Alan Niven, Gary Gersh, Mark Wesley, Phylis Koch, Tom The Razzman, Michael Lardie - backing vocals

After signing on with industry mover and shaker Alan Niven (whose distribution company, Greenworld, also issued Mötley Crüe's first LP) and abandoning their original moniker, "Dante Fox", the newly rechristened Great White officially opened their bait & tackle shop for business with this eponymous 1984 debut. Alternately named *Stick It* in a few foreign markets (and graced with a sleazy band photo instead of the spare but classy, white-logo-on-black cover known to most fans), the album reworked several tracks from that independent EP, *On Your Knees*, and ironically still stands out from Great White's remaining discography thanks to its gritty production and straightforward songs, undiluted, as yet, by the group's looming commercial aspirations. Come to think of it, with the exception of a forgettable swing at the Who's "Substitute," the album's first half may just be the strongest song grouping of the band's entire career; highlighted by the menacing swagger of "Down on Your Knees" and "Stick It," followed close behind by fast-driving opener "Out of the Night," and rounded out by the more restrained, lyrically predictable, but nearly as effective grooves of "Bad Boys." Indeed, such was side A's testosterone-fueled feeding frenzy, that one had to flip over the original vinyl release to side B, before Great White finally started broadening their songwriting palette somewhat...for good and ill. On the upside, the impressive "Street Killer" actually threatened to deliver a first taste of balladry before evolving into yet another, menacing heavy rocker; but, on the downside, the atypically metallic, Judas Priest-derived "No Better Than Hell" and the simply God-awful, unfinished mess of "Nightmares" went nowhere fast. Neither did the utterly forgettable "Hold On" (despite glimpsing the simpler yet anthemic qualities that would anchor Great White's future formula for success), therefore leaving it to the album-capping "Dead End" (very reminiscent of early Dokken) to finish out the album on an energetic thrust of the hips, if not quite as convincingly as anything on side A. Imperfect as it was, though, Great White's first extended swim into the music business cesspool proved that they were easily up to the task of

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scavenging for fans alongside the L.A. glam metal scene's other, not exactly ultra-evolved, musical predators of the period.

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