



Dawn of the Metal Gods: My Life in Judas Priest and Heavy Metal

Al Atkins, Neil Daniels

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Al Atkins is the former lead singer and founder of the multi-million selling British metal band Judas Priest. But where and when did it all begin? During the sixties when the highly lauded Brum Beat era produced bands such as "The Move", Atkins played in various semi-pro outfits. It was in 1969 that Atkins decided to have a go at forming yet another band with his childhood friend Bruno Stapenhill. The band in question was JUDAS PRIEST. Priest quickly built up a reputation in the Midlands as a powerful live act and even secured a record deal with Immediate, which was owned by ex-Rolling Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldham. Atkins even recorded the very first Judas Priest demo: "Good Time Woman" and "We'll Stay Together". Unfortunately, Immediate folded and so did Priest. Undeterred, Atkins resurrected Priest with another line-up in 1970 with guitarist K K Downing and bassist Ian Hill. In '71 they made a 7" single acetate: "Holy is the Man" and "Mind Conception". Through the early seventies Priest supported many bands including Slade, Status Quo and Black Sabbath. A revolving line-up continued until May 1973 when Atkins finally decided to call it a day. His memoirs contain very rare archive photos and memorabilia from Judas Priest's past circa 1969-1973. Also included are interviews with various members of Priest's history. Atkins is the co-writer of several Priest songs which are included on the band's first two albums "Rocka Rolla" and "Sad Wings of Destiny" both of which eventually went Gold. Atkins co-penned the heavy metal classic "Victim of Changes". With a foreword by Judas Priest bassist Ian Hill, "Dawn of the Metal Gods" is not just a book for Judas Priest fans but a bible for all those wishing to form a band in the tumultuous world of heavy metal.

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