

Metallica – Death Magnetic (2008)

Written by bluesever

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1 *That Was Just Your Life* 7:08 2 *The End Of The Line* 7:52 3 *Broken, Beat & Scarred* 6:25 4 *The Day That Never Comes* 7:56 5 *All Nightmare Long* 7:57 6 *Cyanide* 6:39 7 *The Unforgiven III* 7:46 8 *The Judas Kiss* 8:00 9 *Suicide & Redemption* 9:57 10 *My Apocalypse* 5:01
James Hetfield – vocals, rhythm guitar Kirk Hammett – lead guitar Robert Trujillo – bass Lars Ulrich – drums

To truly appreciate the Californian thrash metal titans' return to form requires a rueful revisiting of their most shameful episode. The last time we heard from Metallica, in 2003, they presented the world with *St Anger*, an album so badly produced, toothless and ill-conceived – exacerbated by the toe-curling Spinal Tap squabbling of the accompanying *Some Kind of Monster* documentary – that fans of 20 years standing were forced to rethink their loyalty to the band.

Clearly, though, they've learnt from their mistakes, because *Death Magnetic* sees them howling back to their roots. Whereas *St Anger* sounded like they'd used biscuit tins for drums, here Lars Ulrich thunders; and where before guitarist Kirk Hammett was all but inaudible, here the riffs are fiery, speedy and jaw-droppingly fiddly, returning to centre stage where they belong.

The songs are epic, sprawling luxuriously past the seven-minute mark, while the ominous heartbeat that kick-starts opener 'That Was Just Your Life' metamorphoses into a pumped-up, testosterone-fuelled slab of classic Metallica, James Hetfield's Rikers Island-lifer roar rumbling like he's shepherding in the apocalypse. In among all the snarling and the broken bones there are also moments of real prettiness.

As bright young things fall in and out of fashion, it's a joy to have these gnarled veterans back to

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reinforce the sheer visceral thrill of timeless heavy metal. ---Emma Johnston, theguardian.com

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