

## “Dark Passion Play” Review

It’s hard to believe I’ve only written a single post about Nightwish, considering how much I love the band. So, let’s fix that! It’s time to talk about my second-favorite album of theirs.



[Image](#) by [Ksenia Bramley](#) is licensed under [CC BY 3.0](#).

*Dark Passion Play* is Nightwish’s sixth studio album. Having dropped all the way back in 2007, it’s a verifiable oldie but goodie. The album is the first of two to feature Tarja Turunen’s replacement, Anette Olzon, as lead vocalist. It’s also the direct predecessor to *Imaginaerum*, my favorite album by them and (objectively speaking) their best album to date.

Even on their very first listen, any listener closely familiar with Nightwish can tell that Tuomas Holopainen (the band’s composer since day one) wrote the tracks with Tarja in mind. Many of the

songs have that “operatic” feel to them that has come to define Tarja’s voice, making this album very unfamiliar territory for Anette, a singer with a remarkably different musical background. That said, she manages to make the songs her own, establishing herself as a solid replacement for Tarja and setting the band down a new and exciting path (stylistically speaking).

Track 5, “Master Passion Greed,” is a definite stand-out on this album, as it is arguably the group’s heaviest song to date. The track’s vocals are sung entirely by the band’s male vocalist, Marko Hietala, and it’s very clear that he poured his heart and soul into making this song as insanely hard-hitting as possible. Fun fact: The lyrics are about Tarja’s spouse, Marcelo Cabuli, an Argentine businessman who Tuomas openly blames for Tarja’s departure from the band. The lyrics are fit to burst with anger and hostility, and regardless of whether Tuomas’ resentful feelings towards Cabuli are truly valid, it undeniably makes for a real headbanger of a song.

Apparently, the lyrical content of this song is too close to the heart for the band to even consider playing it in front of a crowd, as it has never once received a live performance. Here’s a sample of the lyrics (in case you’re wondering just how much Tuomas dislikes this guy):

*“Who the [expletive] are you to tell me*

*What to do, why to do, why bother*

*Leech in a mask of virtue*

*Such waste to ever think of you again*

*Hey Judas, your Christess was our love*

*Hit and run, your will be done*

*Never sorry, never wrong*

*More, more, more, more, more”*

Master Passion Greed is far from being the only memorable song on the album – each track stands on its own two feet, offering a unique and distinct listening experience. Also, here’s an obligatory shoutout to “Whoever Brings the Night,” one of my very favorite tracks on the album, the instrumental version of which was also used as boss music in the popular video game *Little Big Planet 2*. It’s not surprising that they opted to use the instrumental version of the song for its in-game cameo appearance, as the lyrics are of a rather mature nature and not exactly suitable for a game with an “E for Everyone” ESRB rating.

Anyway, this album is fantastic from start to finish, and I’m not just saying that as a hardcore Nightwish fan. So, check it out!