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## **A Brave Review**

Roy SeGuine

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Marillion's Brave opens with a "Watcher of the Skys" like atmospheric quality from which the voice of Steve Hogarth emerges, emoting a story about a lost soul. It's a concept album and I think it's perhaps Marillion's best work yet. I know some long time fans will claim something "Fishy" is still not going on here, but I'd say you're still Living With The Big Lie and "Get used to it". "You're carnation will rot in a vase". Seriously, I'm thankful to have both eras of this band and sometimes I do miss my "childhood". Brave is a great mid-90's album which captures the themes that made the 70's progressive bands so enjoyable. The story line centers around a Runaway girl and the lyrics/moods are guaranteed to conjure up unique images in the listeners minds.

Hogarth's vocals at times remind me of a combination of Talk Talk's Mark Hollis and PFM's Bernardo Lanzetti both rolled into one. >From a musician's standpoint, there is really no outstanding point in any band members playing, but perhaps that's why I'm enjoying this album more and more each time I listen.... no single musician tries to stand out and everything blends very well.

Whoa!! Hold on there! What was that killer guitar lead I just heard? I'm just a drummer so I must be Mad. I thought that I was too jaded to be impressed by this sort of thing and had said Goodby Too All That a long time ago. What a minute, I think Floyd has just been out-Pinked! They've taken The Slide. It could be that The Opium Den has left me Standing in the Swing, but I will wager you will "Eat your words" (I'm Rushing now) if you thought you already knew this band.

You know what else? I think that a recent critic who claimed he got a "mistake" copy of Brave missed the point when he tried to elevate Fish lyrics over Hogarth lyrics regarding the subject of love. "Love can be as hard as six inch nails" if your talking about the streets! Musically, you gotta love those sixteenth note syncopated triplets drum fills a la Chocolate King's From Under and also that nice background Fragile keyboard solo. I'm sure "Nothing's ever been as hard!". Lighten up Fishheads (what has he done lately anyway?) - "We'll buy you and we'll sell you but perhaps we'll save your skin".

Oh Lord, there it finally comes out - the "hit" single. Looks like the band is trying to sit in The Lap of Luxury. You'll either feel this is a really catchy tune or you'll want to Now Wash Your Hands of the whole thing. I encourage you to stick around, however, because perhaps what I write on this Paper Lies and there is more than one "hit" single on this CD. ;-)

Track nine has a bagpipe quality that makes me think Jim Kerr (in his heyday) from Simple Minds is about to take center stage. Now I see why they

call this album Brave. This song is so fucking great I think I'm going to cry. "She's gone now, she aches, please somebody search until he's found a way" or I'll have to run to listen to Gentle Giant's Last Voyage from Free Hand. "She's inside you and she's crying". If you choose to stick around for The Great Escape "Your pain and anger's in the howling (Steve Howe that is) dark... Somewhere far away".

Brave closes with a section beginning with a Genesis Horizons / Beatles Blackbird Sings in the Middle of the Night hybrid and moves into a Yes Close to the Edge acoustic rhythm guitar. This helps me see "what is false and what is true". And as I was Made Again I awoke "to a bright new morning, like the world whole world has been made again".

For those of you wondering what I'm talking about, you'll have to *\*listen\** to Brave to understand. I think I spin this disk immediately once again! I'm "Staring out over the bridge".

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Roy SeGuine Cyberspace Architect

*\*If you're not part of the Steamroller, you're part of the Asphalt\**