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A.S. - EXILE

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Album Details

Artist: [A.s.](#)
Album: Exile
Label: [Inedible](#)
Year of Release: 2013
ME Rating: ★★★★★
Reviewed by: [nlathy_on](#)
2013-02-05

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A.S. has put out a second album, which sounds pleasant enough. A track like "Invisible Kiss" makes for acceptable background noise, when someone's driving to visit a romantic interest. But it doesn't create the excitement of meeting your lover the way the Beach Boys do on "Airplane."

Crowded House is cited as an influence. It's pop-rock, which would work well in a movie sound track. But something more dynamic is often preferred in the CD or MP3 player.

Fortunately, this duo can break out of its pop template on a few songs, most notably the haunting "Probable Cause." Here the band moves into territory charted back in the 1970s by Blue Oyster Cult and more recently Tomahawk. Granted this isn't quite as hard rocking, but Elton John wasn't heavy metal when he rocked in his hey day, yet it was fast enough.

Nick McRoberts can alter his vocal style to good effect. This is evident on "Time." There's a good guitar riff by Idris Halfaoui here, as well. Some needed edginess comes through on this song. McRoberts hits the high notes, recalling vintage R.E.M.

These guys can come up with a hook. "Why The Hell Not?" may draw in listeners with the title. But it's sufficiently catchy with the music, also. Here McRoberts does his best job of conjuring up romantic energy with his singing and lyrics.

Elsewhere, opening guitar riffs provide the starting point for strong songs, but the finished product leaves you wanting more.

This reality comes forth most apparently on the acoustic "Reasonable Doubts." There's a Jethro Tull like intro, but this isn't enough to make the song memorable. Jethro Tull's Aqualung works best as a hard rock album. A.S. takes a journey into self help rhetoric. It's a nice bouquet for aspiring artists, but it falls short of endearing rock sentiment.

Stil I prefer this duo to Jethro Tull. Now if they can just organize their creativity into more dynamic rock songs.

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