## Sting – Nothing Like The Sun (1987)




*01 The Lazarus Heart 02 Be Still My Beating Heart 03 Englishman In New York 04 History Will Teach Us Nothing 05 They Dance Alone (Gueca Solo) 06 Fragile 07 We'll Be Together 08 Straight To My Heart 09 Rock Steady 10 Sister Moon 11 Little Wing 12 The Secret Marriage* Backing Vocals – Dolette McDonald, Janice Pendarvis, Renee Geyer, Vesta Williams Drums – Andy Newmark, Manu Katché Keyboards – Kenny Kirkland Percussion – Mino Cinelu Vocals, Bass, Guitar – Sting Vocals [Vocoder] – Mino Cinelu + Guitar – Andy Summers, Eric Clapton, Fareed Haque, Mark Knopfler, Hiram Bullock Vocals [Spanish] – Ruben Blades Bass – Mark Egan Drums – Kenwood Dennard Orchestra – Gil Evans And His Orchestra Piano – Ken Helman

If Dream of the Blue Turtles was an unabashedly pretentious affair, it looks positively lighthearted in comparison to Sting's sophomore effort, Nothing Like the Sun, one of the most doggedly serious pop albums ever recorded. This is an album where the only up-tempo track, the only trifle -- the cheerfully stiff white-funk "We'll Be Together" -- was added at the insistence of the label because they believed there wasn't a cut on the record that could be pulled as a single, one that would break down the doors to mainstream radio. And they were right, since everything else here is too measured, calm, and deliberately subtle to be immediate (including the intentional throwaway, "Rock Steady"). So, why is it a better album than its predecessor? Because Sting doesn't seem to be trying so hard. It flows naturally, largely because this isn't trying to explicitly be a jazz-rock record (thank the presence of a new rhythm section of Sting and drummer Manu Katche for that) and because the melodies are insinuating, slowly working their way into memory, while the entire record plays like a mood piece -- playing equally well as background music or as intensive, serious listening. Sting's words can still grate -- the stifling pompousness of "History Will Teach Us Nothing" the clearest example, yet calls of "Hey Mr. Pinochet" also strike an uneasy chord -- but his lyricism shines on "The Lazarus Heart," "Be Still My Beating Heart," "They Dance Alone," and "Fragile," a quartet of his very finest songs. If Nothing Like the Sun runs a little too long, with only his Gil Evans-assisted cover of "Little Wing" standing out in the final quarter, it still maintains its tone until the end and, since it's buoyed by those previously mentioned stunners, it's one of his better albums. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, AllMusic Review

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