

## Deep Purple – Abandon (1998)

Written by bluesever

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1. Any fule know that 2. Almost human 3. Don't make me happy 4. Seventh heaven 5. Watching the sky 6. Fingers to the bone 7. Jack Ruby 8. She was 9. Whatsername 10. '69 11. Evil Louie 12. Bludsucker Personnel Ian Gillan – vocals Steve Morse – guitar Roger Glover – bass Jon Lord – organ, keyboards Ian Paice – drums

Guitarist Steve Morse had one album and several tours under his belt when Deep Purple returned to the recording studio during late 1997 and early 1998. He had integrated smoothly with vocalist Ian Gillan, keyboardist Jon Lord, bassist Roger Glover, and drummer Ian Paice to form one of the better incarnations in Deep Purple history. His straight ahead rock guitar virtuosity had helped the band modernize their sound, which was critical to their lasting popularity.

Abandon (1998) is an above average, if not outstanding, hard rock album. It is a complete band effort that produced a cohesive work. While there may be no truly classic songs, there are a number of good ones. I have found the overall album to be much better than the sum of its parts, as the songs move smoothly from one to the other to form a unit. In the final analysis the album makes sense plus it rocked all the way through.

The sound now centered around Morse's guitar. While Lord would step forward at times, most of the time he would fill in the gaps. Gillan continued his transition from upper register screamer to a more restrained style and vocal range. Glover's pulsating bass and Paice's thundering drums continued to provide the underpinning for their sound.

The first two tracks set the tone for what follows. "Any Fule Kno That" is a unique rocker with a

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spoken word approach by Gillan. The title is slang for a swindle and is taken from a Nigel Molesworth book. It was followed by “Almost Human,” which is a slower tempo tune where Morse steps forward for a brilliant guitar solo.

The songs meander along as the tempos change but seemed to fit seamlessly together. “Don’t Make Me Happy” has a smooth bluesy feel. “Jack Ruby” is the track where Gillan proves he can still hit the high notes once in a while, at least in the studio, and is a song where Jon Lord’s keyboard work is more prominent. “She Was” is a tip of the hat to the Deep Purple of old as the guitar and keyboard intertwine in a creative and improvisational way.

The two heaviest tracks are the bone crunching “Seventh Heaven” and “Bludsucker,” which is a re-imagining of “Bloodsucker” from their In Rock album.

Abandon is the last Deep Purple album of the 20th century, and it finds the band moving bravely into the future. It continues and in some ways enhances their reputation as one of the better modern day hard rock bands. --- blogcritics.org

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