

Queen - Made in Heaven (2011)

Written by bluesever

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01 – *It's A Beautiful Day* 02 – *Made In Heaven* 03 – *Let Me Live* 04 – *Mother Love* 05 – *My Life Has Been Saved* [play](#) 06 – *I Was Born To Love You* 07 – *Heaven For Everyone* 08 – *Too Much Love Will Kill You* 09 – *You Don't Fool Me* 10 – *A Winter's Tale* 11 – *It's A Beautiful Day (reprise)* 12 – *(Yeah)* 13 – *(Dead)* Bonus CD:
01 – *Heaven For Everyone (Single Version)* 02 – *It's A Beautiful Day (B-Side Version)* 03 – *My Life Has Been Saved (1989 B-Side Version)* 04 – *I Was Born To Love You (Vocal & Piano Version)*

[play](#)

05 – *Rock In Rio Blues (Live B-Side)* 06 – *A Winter's Tale (Cosy Fireside Mix)*
Backing Vocals [Extra] – Catherine Porter (A3), Gary Martin (A3), Miriam Stockley (A3), Rebecca Leigh-White (A3) Bass Guitar, Keyboards – John Deacon Drums, Percussion, Keyboards, Vocals – Roger Taylor Guitar, Keyboards, Vocals – Brian May Vocals, Piano, Keyboards – Freddie Mercury

Ten months after the release of the 1991 album *Innuendo*, Freddie Mercury died of complications brought on by AIDS; he was 45. To this day, most people hold *Innuendo* dear to their hearts because it was such a solid finale with one of rock's greatest frontmen. After Mercury's death, the remaining members of Queen decided to make one last album with his pre-recorded vocals and a mix of new and old compositions. Thus, in 1995, *Made in Heaven* was released to much acclaim; this was the record to bring closure to the band's career, and it seemed to be a bold success. However, this album is more than just a great record; it's a perfect musical epitaph.

The album's music is sort of a mix between 80s and 70s Queen, much like *The Miracle* or *Innuendo*. There are the typical synthesizers, melodic guitar lines, and powerful vocals on this record, although there's definitely an emphasis on the softer side of things. This is the sort of album that takes time to let the atmosphere build and let the listener breathe a bit. This is especially demonstrated in the vocal harmonies, which are as soothing as ever. The

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gospel-oriented intro to "Let Me Live" is particularly beautiful, with lovely female vocals and a nice buildup in dynamics before the drums (and verse) kick in. But it's not only the vocal harmonies; the way the music is arranged plays a big part in this album's quality. For instance, the intro track "It's a Beautiful Day" could have easily thrown the listener right into Freddie Mercury's introductory vocal melody, but instead submerges you in a sea of ambient keyboard work. As the dynamics build and more "nature"-esque samples enter the music, everything just becomes all the more beautiful. There's also a bit of a melancholic side that this record shows when songs like "Mother Love" and "You Don't Fool Me" start up. These songs especially benefit from Brian May's almost new-age guitar lines as he weaves many different melodies throughout the rest of the instrumentation. The band members feel like a cohesive unit on this album, despite the unusual way it was recorded; John Deacon and Roger Taylor are as solid as ever in the rhythm section while Brian May and Freddie Mercury (his voice recordings, to be more precise) keep the solid melodies and hooks coming. The point where all of this meets full circle is in the title track; everything about the song feels so complete, from Brian May's harmonized guitar work to the inspirational chorus. Nothing feels out of place; it's a perfect song all around.

I could spend all day giving a complete analysis of this record, but there's something more to it than that. Just think about the fact that we're listening to the last work of Freddie Mercury, his last time up to the mic for a Queen recording. That really got me thinking: this is the band embracing finality with a sense of joy and splendor. Yeah, there are melancholic moments, but they're certainly overshadowed by Freddie Mercury's strong resolve in the face of his own defeat. This album kinda acts as a reflection of the band's career and Mercury's own life in particular; that fact makes many of these songs more powerful than they otherwise would have been. The biggest example song-wise by far is the untitled track at the very end of the album. There's a reprise of "It's a Beautiful Day" at the end of the record that leads into a four-second song titled "Yeah"; the track that begins beneath Freddie's utterance of this word is a 22-minute ambient piece. This song is what the record is all about. This is one of the most bizarre Queen songs as well; there are no drums (with the exception of some cymbal and hi-hat sounds here and there), no guitar work, no bass work, nothing but keyboard work and some voice clips from Freddie. May people like to consider this song Freddie Mercury's musical "ascension into heaven" so to speak, and I'd actually agree with that. The reason is that, near the very end of the piece, there's a beautifully arranged symphonic section that gives off an indescribable feeling of joy and release. Other portions of the song are a bit more strange; around the sixteen-minute mark, there's a very depressing synth melody that really changes the overall mood. On top of that, the last thing that this song has to offer is Freddie Mercury uttering the word "Fab."

How are we supposed to respond to all of this? That's for you to decide. I see this album (and especially the last song) as an amazing example of perseverance in the face of darkness and death, but everything about this record is up for interpretation. Made in Heaven is a very intriguing way to end a band's discography, but it should be treasured for what it is: a beautiful

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epilogue to one of rock's finest bands and singers. ---Necrotica, progarchives.com

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