

The Beautiful South - Superbi (2006)

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1 *The Rose Of My Cologne* 3:50 2 *Manchester* 3:57 3 *There Is Song* 4:11 4 *The Cat Loves The Mouse* 3:39 5 *The Next Verse* 4:56 6 *When Romance Is Dead* 3:04 7 *Meanwhile* 3:21 8 *Space* 3:40 9 *Bed Of Nails* 4:13 10 *Never Lost A Chicken To A Fox* 4:17 11 *From Now On* 4:46 12 *Tears* 4:08 Banjo, Dobro, Mandolin – Jonny Scott Bass – Sean Welch Drums – David Stead Guitar – Dave Rotheray Keyboards – Damon Butcher Percussion – Gary Hammond Sequenced By [Protools] – Louis Read Strings – The London Session Orchestra Vocals – Alison Wheeler, Dave Hemingway, Paul Heaton

Superbi was the ninth album by the Beautiful South, eleven if you count two different greatest-hits packages, produced by former Tears for Fears keyboardist, Ian Stanley. For nearly two decades, they had been winning sales by singing melancholy, bittersweet love songs with a twist, lyrics that never quite added up to straightforward boy meets girl, and here was more of the same. Why change a winning formula, even when it's ceased to be so winning? Had they been around at the time, none of the tracks from Superbi would have made it onto either of the hits compilations, Carry on Up the Charts or Solid Bronze, but with so many big chart hits to choose from, the Beautiful South were spoiled and did not have to worry about the track "Manchester" only reaching number 41 (the dreaded number 41) or "The Rose of My Cologne" not even hitting the Top 75 at all. In better times, they would have done considerably better, but by 2007 the band was not at their peak. Alison "Lady" Wheeler joined Paul Heaton on the counter boy/girl harmonies as the band served up their classic two styles of song, either the wistful romantic ballad with "Bed of Nails," "There Is Song," and "The Next Verse," or the country dancing style-like tracks "Space," "Meanwhile," "The Cat Loves a Mouse," and "Never Lost a Chicken to a Fox." [The CD was also released with a bonus track.] ---Sharon Mawer, AllMusic Review

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