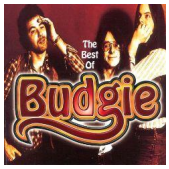
Budgie – Best Of (1999)



1 Crash Course In Brain Surgery 2:35 2 Guts 4:20 3 Stranded 6:18 4 In The Grip Of A Tyrefitters Hand 6:30 5 Homicidal Suicidal 6:30 6 Whisky River 3:27 7 Hot As A Dockers Armpit 5:54 8 Baby Please Dont Go 5:30 9 Breadfan 6:10 10 Rape Of The Locks 6:10 11 Nude DesinTegrating / Parachutist Women 8:30 12 Parents 10:25 13 Riding My Nightmare 2:43 Bass Guitar, Vocals – Burke Shelley Drums – Pete Boot, Ray Phillips, Steve Williams Guitar – Tony Bourge

Often thought of as a cross between Black Sabbath (due to their plodding, molten-heavy riffs) and Rush (due to their singer's high-pitched, Geddy Lee-esque wail), the somewhat obscure British metal outfit Budgie has influenced countless outfits, despite enduring countless lineup shifts throughout their history. The group originally formed in 1967 in Cardiff, Wales, comprised of members Burke Shelley (vocals, bass), Tony Bourge (guitar), and Raymond Phillips (drums), and by the early '70s, they'd inked a deal with MCA Records. This early lineup remains Budgie's most definitive, due to the fact that it spawned three of the group's finest albums -- 1971's self-titled debut, 1972's Squawk, and 1973's Never Turn Your Back on a Friend -- while the group's quirky song titles became somewhat of a trademark for the trio (such ditties as "Nude Disintegrating Parachutist Woman," "Hot as a Docker's Armpit," "In the Grip of a Tyrefitter's Hand," and "You're the Biggest Thing Since Powdered Milk"). For fans of early Sabbath, the aforementioned three discs are a must-have.

Despite building a sizeable following in their homeland (while never breaking out of cult status stateside), Phillips left the group prior to their fourth album, 1974's In for the Kill!, replaced by newcomer Pete Boot, which would in turn set off a flurry of steady lineup changes over the years for the group (the only constant Budgie member from the beginning was Shelley). Further releases were issued throughout the '70s, including 1975's Bandolier, 1976's If I Were Brittania I'd Wave the Rules, and 1978's Impeckable, but each appeared to be less inspired than its predecessor. With the emergence of the New Wave of British Heavy Metal movement (Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, Motörhead, etc.), interest in Budgie appeared to be rekindled once more in

England, as Budgie headlined the Reading Festival in 1980 and 1982, in addition to issuing such albums as 1980's If Swallowed Do Not Induce Vomit and Power Supply, 1981's Nightflight, and 1982's Deliver Us from Evil.

Shelley and company would remain together for a few more years before splitting up quietly by the mid-'80s (ex-members Bourge and Phillips would unite in a new group called Tredegar, issuing a lone self-titled release in 1985). But almost as soon as they disbanded, several high-profile groups began covering Budgie classics, including Metallica ("Crash Course in Brain Surgery" and "Breadfan"), Iron Maiden ("I Can't See My Feelings"), and Soundgarden ("Homicidal Suicidal"), while back in their early club days Van Halen was known to cover the title track from In for the Kill! Budgie reunited for sporadic live gigs throughout the '90s (while past members formed the similarly styled outfits Six Ton Budgie and Boot66), resulting in several archival collections being issued: the best-of compilations An Ecstasy of Fumbling: The Definitive Anthology (a double-disc set) and Best of Budgie (a single disc), as well as the live sets Heavier Than Air: Live on the BBC and We Came We Saw (the latter of which featured selections from both of their Reading Festival appearances in the early '80s). ---Greg Prato, allmusic.com

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