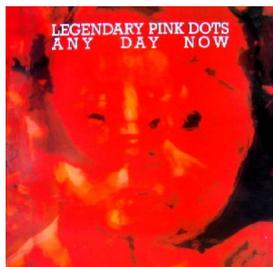


## Brainwashed - Legendary Pink Dots, "Any Day Now"

Written by Anthony D'Amico

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First released on Play It Again Sam back in 1987 and newly reissued on Metropolis, *Any Day Now* is one of the jewels of The Legendary Pink Dots' '80s discography. Sadly, I was far too busy scouring *Circus* for Guns N' Roses news to notice it when it first surfaced and only started to delve into the Dots' catalog in the mid-'90s. As a result, *Any Day Now* was already 25 years old by the time I eventually heard it as part of the Dots' ambitious remastering campaign a few years back. In some respects, I suppose *Any Day Now* felt a bit dated in places when I finally heard it, but I was far more struck by how vibrant and fleshed-out the band sounded as a six-piece (the violin of Patrick Wright is especially delightful). I am hesitant to say that The Legendary Pink Dots once "rocked," but the full-band aesthetic of that era was certainly quite a different experience than the more distilled and Ka-Spel-centric fare of recent years. Both eras have their share of highlights, certainly, but *Any Day Now* captures The Legendary Pink Dots at their most lively, playful, and hook-minded, largely excising all of their most indulgent tendencies to craft an incredibly endearing suite of psych-pop gems. This is a legitimate classic.

### [Metropolis](#)

The overall aesthetic of *Any Day Now* is quite a fascinating and unusual one, resembling a cross between an ambitious prog rock concept album and an unnervingly creepy children's book, evoking a wide range of characters and scenes that seem to weave a strange and elusive narrative. I have no idea what it all means or if any of the individual pieces are intended parts of larger story, but it certainly feels like colorful, dramatic, and surreal journey regardless. For example, the violin-driven waltz "The Gallery" feels like a charmingly foppish bit of cabaret with amusingly wobbly fretless bass, while the brief "The Peculiar Funfair" resembles a glimpse of a manic and nightmarish circus. Elsewhere, the album's most tender and nakedly lovely piece, "Laguna Beach," is a delicately twinkling bit of chamber pop balladry that sounds plucked from a fairytale. Lurking among all of those anachronistic divergences are a number of songs that are very much of their time, however, embodying a particularly eccentric blend of the era's

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pervading art-pop tropes: big electronic drums, sliding fretless bass, saxophone solos, and proggy instrumental breaks. There is even a brief and amusing flourish of slapping and popping funk bass at one point. On pieces like "Strychnine Kiss" and "True Love" that aesthetic can certainly feel dated, but it at least feels dated in a very charming way: it still sounds unmistakably like The Legendary Pink Dots, but it feels like The Legendary Pink Dots crashing some '80s pop gig and doing an impromptu set on borrowed instruments. Also, several of the more '80s-sounding pieces are more than strong enough to transcend such quirks. In particular, "Neon Mariner" stands as an especially striking highlight, balancing out its booming drums and awkwardly funky bass with wonderfully moody keyboards, lovely violin counter-melodies, tight songcraft, and an impressively strong chorus.

Notably, Play It Again Sam's 1988 CD reissue of *Any Day Now* appended the *Under Glass* EP, which has remained attached to the album ever since (to some fans' chagrin). I think those fans can be safely dismissed as absolute lunatics though, as the three songs from

*Under Glass*

definitely make the album significantly better and more substantial. Normally, I too tend to be hostile to the idea of expanding a classic album with bonus tracks, as most bonus tracks generally fall into that category precisely because they were not good enough to make the album. While I could give or take the driving rocker "The Plasma Twins," the thumping and pulsing electro-pop of "Under Glass" is one of the single most perfect pop songs on the entire album. More importantly, "The Light In My Little Girl's Eyes" is one of the most gloriously weird and creepily erotic songs in the entire LPD canon. I cannot think of anything else quite like it, as it combines some of Ka-Spel's finest and most unnervingly perverse lyrics ("Are you feeling dirty? Yes, but also very pleased") with an unexpectedly propulsive and wild instrumental backdrop. There is even some light cannibalism at the end (something for everyone, really). I never expected to write that the Dots had a killer rhythm section, but the band was legitimately firing on all cylinders in this case and bassist Jason Salmon and drummer Tony Copier deserve a hell of a lot of the credit for that. Even the guitar and violin solos are great. Rarely have I heard the Dots tear it up quite like they do here. In a perfect world, the album probably would end there, but

*Any Day Now*

is further augmented by one final song, "Gladiators (Version Apocalypse)," which comes from *Stone Circles*

but was recorded during the same sessions as this album. As such, its inclusion makes sense, but its proggy jamming does not hit nearly the same heights as "Little Girl's Eyes."

It is kind of amusing and fascinating to travel back to a time when Ka-Spel and The Silverman still had identifiable influences, as they have long since transcended that and seem far more like a (super)natural phenomenon that is only influenced by itself these days. I mean that in the best possible way, of course, as the duo have plunged so deeply into their lysergic rabbit hole at this point that Ka-Spel seems more like an impossibly wise psychedelic shaman than an unusually literate frontman of a cool rock band. I certainly have room in my heart for both. My

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only real caveat with *Any Day Now* is that it captures The Legendary Pink Dots at their most catchy, accessible, and (comparatively) straightforward, which is a contrast to the deeper, more intense, and more experimental fare that the band is generally known for. That has caused some fans to view it as one of LPD's more lightweight releases, but it does not feel that way to me at all. While *Any Day Now* is certainly not heavy psychedelia by any means, it is far from a watered-down or toothless version of the band. Instead, it feels like they just had an unusually great batch of songs and executed them with atypically sharp focus, resulting in quite a bright, vibrant, listenable, and (again, comparatively) fun album. As such, *Any Day Now* is easily one of the most essential releases in the band's entire overwhelming discography and an ideal point of entry for the curious.

Samples can be found [here](#).