

## Mp3 Ash Valley - Castle In The Clouds



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Tastefully-understated electronic beats ethereal synthesizers mesh with clean acoustic guitars to create a stately expansive sonic atmosphere. Accompanying are introspective, relentlessly-honest lyrics sung with informed fervor. 10 MP3 Songs ELECTRONIC: Pop Crossover, FOLK: Folk Pop Details: 'Castle in the Clouds' represents the cumulative efforts of three youngish Southern men toward creating a coherent musical statement about life as viewed through hard experiences darkening windows. Set in a rural town beyond anywhere most folk would find themselves anxious to call home, the songs on this album tell the stories of individuals who once believed in the promise of the future, of brighter, reachable vistas waiting patiently over the mountaintops, calling out to all willing to climb: "I am all you ever hoped for, all you've always dreamed life has to offer. I am the perfect view. I am confidence contentment. Come lay your claim on me!" Unfortunately, not all who embark upon realizing their dreams are fated to reach such fabled summits. Shortfalls sidetracks will ever lay to waste the visions of those without pure aim. These are the fading souls whose tales are sung by Andy Ampersand set to music by Brian Branam Canon Snow. Andy once thought himself to be one of fortune's casualties. He'd grown up the son of blue-collar workers, had watched Mom Dad rise before the sun retire long after it had descended into the Western horizon. There was a lot of workaday trudging, relentless toil, an investment that returned little more than food shelter for themselves their children. Still, those were no small blessings, should be duly counted as such. Thing is, Andy had always believed in the written word, the ineluctable, irrefutable eloquence grace that guided the quill in the hand of the seer. For prophets, as far as Andy was concerned, were what all true writers were: Those who were granted a vision to take to the people, one that would show them their own thoughts, their very essences, laid out bare exposed, clear piercing, upon the page. Andy had peered deeply into his own reflection for quite a while had found there the oscillating images of

all those with whom his own life's walk had brought into contact. He became convinced, over time, that he had a vision to share with the world. He absolutely knew that he could wake folk up, shake their spirits from slumbering states, cause them to see a hint of grandiosity in seemingly mundane surroundings. He determined, finally, to set his vision to music, for it seemed to him that there could scarcely be a more pleasant means by which to stir people's souls than through a song. Alas, the mountain was steep, Andy eventually wearied. He lacked the musical know-how to give shape to his vision, had failed, time again, to come across the people necessary to honorably aid him (let it be known, however, that he in no way faults those with whom he had initiated aborted efforts. Fate, it seems, just wasn't ready to reveal itself to him) in doing so. Andy resolved to content himself with the working life that his parents had known, put to rest the obviously-errant fantasy of becoming a soothsayer. Happily, Andy's resolution was premature, for one day, seemingly by chance, he was reintroduced to an old acquaintance, Canon Snow, whom it turned out was quite an extraordinary guitar picker. The two realized rather suddenly that they'd be foolish not to set about establishing Andy's long-imagined musical carving, though of course they would thereafter be only partly Andy's, for Canon brought to the whittling table his own share of vigor and vision. Still missing and sorely needed was an individual who could caringly capture for posterity Andy and Canon's musings. Fate again was finally aligned with them, for a cousin of Canon's by the name of Brian Branam was just finishing earning a degree in recording/engineering. After hearing what they'd put together so far, Brian agreed to help them out, and in fact ended up enjoying the ensuing collaborative process so much that he officially joined up with Andy and Canon, cemented a trio that chose to call itself Ash Valley. The three spent an entire winter, spring, summer writing, performing, recording, mixing the ten songs that would eventually become 'Castle in the Clouds'. All three poured their talent and determination into producing an outstanding song suite. It was by no means an easy task: Exhausting, stressful hours, weeks, months went into what turned out to be a protracted, laborious process. They held fast, though, saw it through, and believe they ultimately succeeded in crafting a unique, fluid, assured inaugural musical offering. Ash Valley hopes that these songs show you a part of yourself that has always existed without your being fully aware of it. Andy, Canon, Brian definitely learned a good deal about themselves during the journey of assembling the musical piece before you. Also, they want everyone to know that these songs are indeed concerned with falling off the path to glory, but are also ultimately about reaching deep within one's self, mustering the strength and courage to get up out of whatever ditch one has fallen into, climbing out, getting

back on the path.

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