



## Clive Gregson & Christine Collister **"Mischief"** Gott Discs

Anyone familiar with the track sequencing of the original U.K. Topic/Special Delivery Records edition of **"Mischief"** [1987], might be a little thrown by this Gott Discs reissue. For a start the 2007 Gott version features fifteen tracks, while only eleven cuts, including ten Gregson penned originals, appeared on the aforementioned original release. The reason? A year on from its Topic release, the Stateside version of **"Mischief"** issued by Rhino Records featured three 'bonus' songs [+]. Now if you're at all handy with math you'll figure that we're still one track adrift – and this is where label owner Mike Gott is to be congratulated since the new edition of **"Mischief"** opens and closes, respectively, with the remixed U.S. and original U.K. versions of "I Wouldn't Treat A Dog." A bonus filled bargain.....

Clive and Christine apart, the contributing players on **"Mischief"** were drummer Martin Hughes formerly a member of Clive's late 1970's/early 1980's 'rock' band Any Trouble, guitarist Howard Lees [with John Hobson, one half of the duo Hobson & Lees] and from Richard Thompson's band bassist Rory McFarlane. Penned by Michael Price/Daniel Walsh/Steve Barri/Michael Omartian "I Wouldn't Treat A Dog" is the only cover on the collection, and a song Clive was already thoroughly familiar with by way of a Bobby Bland 7" single rendition. Launched by a repeating guitar riff, on this soulful sounding number, vocally, the listener is privy to the 'full-on Collister.' Also sung by Christine the theme of cheating the one you love permeates the lyric of Gregson's first 'bonus' song "Everybody Cheats On You," following which Clive takes the lead vocal on "That Same Mistake." On the opening track Christine proved – beyond any shadow of a doubt – that she possessed a big voice, while Clive's big ballad "I Specialise" confirms her versatility as, vocally restrained, she wrings every ounce of emotion for the lyric.

One facet of Gregson's creative oeuvre that I haven't alluded to so far is his ability to consistently pen hook laden 'folk pop' melodies – ones that you want to hear over and over! - and that skill is particularly evident on the duet "We're Not Over Yet." Rarely a storyteller, Clive's forte as a lyricist lies in portraying the manner [using poetic allusion] in which we humans interact with our environment and, more particularly, with one another - as friends, fleeting acquaintances or as lovers. The second and third 'bonus' songs are, respectively, "I Wonder What Went Wrong" and "This Tender Trap." In the former, "stood up" the narrator concludes that her latest relationship is over before it really began, while the latter song prominently features the sound of a slide guitar. "I Will Be There" is a love ballad that you'd expect to hear, late at night, in a smoky basement jazz bar. It's the only Clive Gregson collaboration on **"Mischief"** and was written with John Hobson. The penultimate track "Farewell Note" is a gentle lilting acoustic guitar led instrumental, and the collection closes with the longer U.K. album version of "I Wouldn't Treat A Dog."

Excuse the pun, but two-decades on **"Mischief"** remains a Gott to have disc!

### **Note.**

[+] – In the U.K. during 1988 Topic/Special Delivery issued a 12" single that included a remixed version of the A Side and the three 'bonus' songs on the B Side.

Folkwax Score 7 out of 10

### **Arthur Wood.**

Kerrville Kronikles 07/07.