

Mp3 Zoe Mulford - Roadside Saints



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Spellbinding lyrics and compelling stories from an award-winning contemporary folk magician 12 MP3 Songs FOLK: like Joni, FOLK: Modern Folk Details: Zoe Mulford's second album has fulfilled promise of her first, with a vengeance. As a first album for a singer-songwriter in the folk vein, *Traveling Moon* had all the elements one would normally describe as promising. The songs are well crafted, extremely listenable, with a couple of natural standouts the wry *If I Had a Cello* the instant anthem *Life is Too Short to Fold Underwear* and an originality overall that boded well for things to come. In hindsight however, only the enigmatic *The Street that Wasnt There* gave any hint of the giant leap she had brewing. With *Roadside Saints*, Zoe Mulford has joined the elite group of singer- songwriters whose songs are able to make the elusive leap from the individual to the universal and, even more elusive, to bring the listener with her when she leaps. *Elegy*, the opener, on the surface a story about glassware (yes, glassware), looks mortality in the face through the family crystal and drinks a quiet toast to the reaper over breakfast. *Blues for Two* pokes fun at the harm love does to all concerned and consoles itself that at least we dont have to suffer alone. *Our Lady of the Highway*, the collections monster hit (you heard it here) turns a Maryland roadside shrine into a weary blessing for all wandering humanity (just try not singing along when the chorus comes back around). Each song has its unique voice, invoking a myriad of styles. At first listen, in fact, the album could easily be taken for a collection of traditional songs from a handful of genres: the quietly cold-blooded *Nobody Knocking* with its sparse, Appalachian edge, the boisterous Celtic gaiety of *American Wake*, the world music tempos of *Stone Song*. The glue that holds this heady soup together is the voice and presence of the singer, which is surprisingly comfortable in her closetful of varied costumes. John Jennings skillful production hits the not too much, not too little bulls eye and invariably support the songs. An ensemble cast of supporting instruments- Rosie Shipleys violin, Pat Wictors slide guitar, Cheryl

Prashkers percussion, Zoes brother Tobys bass each make their contribution, as does the producer with a tasteful touch of keyboards. But what comes through in every track is the voice of the artist, a voice I suspect a lot of people are going to be hearing very soon. The first time Zoe Mulford listener is in for a pleasant surprise, as are fans of her first album, by how far she has come in so short a time. There is an optimism in these songs (Im Gonna Wear Red, for instance), but it is not the optimism of the nave or self-sheltering. Its an optimism we can all share and very badly need just about now. - Charles Nolan

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