

Mp3 Harley Carmen - Love & Loss



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Country folk roots rocker- a collection of unique and original material. If you like heartfelt story telling songs coupled with dynamic melodies and production, then this record is for you. 12 MP3 Songs

COUNTRY: Country Rock, FOLK: Folk-Rock Details: Harley Carmen Bio Harley Carmen remembers how, when he was five, hed get into his fathers storage shed, break up old furniture to make drumsticks, set the vinyl-topped kitchen chairs up as drums, and play along with the songs of Johnny Cash and Charley Pride. Living in a little place like Harrop, out in the Kootenays, it wasnt like there was a music store handy, he explains. Harley grew up surrounded by music. He recalls how his mother would suddenly just put the vacuum down, walk over to the piano and start playing what she called mountain musicsongs like Irene, Goodnight and Will the Circle Be Unbroken. If his father were home, hed play along on the harmonica, and his sister would sing. It was a big event for Harley when his older brothers came home for visits, because they played guitar and sang music by the greats like Merle Haggard, Elvis, and Buddy Holly. He smiles and allows it was pretty cool being the youngest in a close family. His first song, Little Brother sums up those times: The best friends in my life are family. Harley continued drumming with broken chair parts, (demolishing the bongos at his elementary school in the process), until, when he was 12, he found waiting for him in the Carmen living room on Christmas morning a real set of drums. It was an act of pure self defense by my parents, he grins. Not long after, Harley was up at Lardeau visiting his brother Dean, who introduced him to Waylon and Willie, John Prine and Kris Kristofferson. He was so taken with the latters Silver Tongued Devil that he gave the record to his mother for a Christmas present. Hes still not sure who was more surprised when they opened their presents and realized theyd given each other exactly the same record! Later on, in high school, Harley got into The Who and the Rolling Stones, but still fed the country side of his soul with artists like The Ozark Mountain

Daredevils, Bim (Roy Forbes) and the Eagles . Then, when he was 17, he quit playing music. I kept listening, but stopped playing. He shrugs. I guess hockey, girls and cars just seemed more important. Then, at age 22, now married and working in Trail as a millwright, he bought a new set of drums and started practicing again. Problem was, he grins sheepishly, we were living in a trailer court. A year later, he was in his first real band, covering top 40. He remembers their fist gig, in the Salmo Hotel, and the first song they played, Sweet Home Alabama. There were only about 15 people in the place, but they didnt leave, and at the end of the night, when I actually got paid, I felt like a friggin rock star, he chuckles. More gigs came, and one band evolved into another. Harley stresses, however, that he always had a day job. As he puts it, I worked for a living, and played music for the love of it. That love of music made 1987 a big year in Harleys life, taking him to Vancouver, where he played some pretty hard rock with a number of bands for the next 12 years. They were writing their own music, now, so getting it out there often meant playing five nights a week. As he puts it, Youve got to love what youre doing, to do it till three in the morning, then haul your butt off to work. (Work now meant being a refrigeration mechanic, a trade Harley still practices.) 1987 was, too, the year he discovered Steve Earle, whose music would become a ruling passion in his life. (Even as he is telling me this, Harley is wearing a Steve Earle T-shirt and a cap with a lone star on it.) And 1987 was also, tragically, the year his mom passed away, with his father following not long after. Listen to Phone Call to Heaven, and My Fathers Birthday, and youll hear what I see on his face as he talks about losing his folks. Owed to Fanny and Al similarly speaks about love and loss, (the title of his CD) and the need for more compassion in the world. Even as a drummer playing hard rock in the big city, though, Harley and his wife, Kim, had been trading the bright lights for starlight, escaping on weekend camping and fishing trips to the country around Merritt; and one day he realized, as his song says, Livin in the country is where I want to be. So in 1995 they bought an acreage near Merritt, and three years later Harley moved up and started his own business. It did well, and he and Kim built their home here, on Pinerock Ridge. Harley has come home to the country. Hes also returned to his musical origins. In 1999, he started drumming with a succession of local country/rock groups. But they just couldnt seem to hold together, he remembers, acknowledging a truth known to anyone who has been in a band. Then, on Labour Day weekend, 2003, while camped at Alleyne Lake, his long-time friend Roy Code showed him three chords on the guitar. That turned out to be a seminal point in my life, he says. Id always written poetry, but I was never able to complete anything. But once I got those three chords down--G, C and

The music and lyrics just seemed to come. The guitar let me take a thought and finish it. Some of those finished thoughts are in Harley's new CD. He captures the spirit of the community in the Merritt Song, officially endorsed as such. Another track is about his animals, one of which is purring on my lap. Some are serious. Pleasure to Serve honours Kim's grandfather and all veterans-- while Not a Real Cowboy pokes good-natured fun at human airs and affectations. But it's time to go. I dislodge the cat, and as Harley sees me out, we hear a meadowlark singing in the dusk. They've got more than one song, you know, says Harley. I admit that I didn't know. But as I get into my truck, I'm thinking that we are going to be hearing a lot more songs from Harley Carmen. By Al Horne People who are interested in Steve Earle John Prine should consider this download.

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