

Mp3 Jonathan Coulton - Thing A Week One



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Well-crafted geek pop from the incredible Thing a Week series. Unspoiled, piping hot goodness, fresh from the muse. 12 MP3 Songs POP: Folky Pop, POP: Quirky Details: Fall time is Coulton time Corduroy jackets and mulled cider. Turtlenecks and apple picking and the slow, aching death of everything green and good in the world. Big, bounding, fluffy golden retrievers leaping through your patio windows and tearing apart your house for no reason. And piles of burning leaves in the yard, with Jonathan Coulton staring into the inferno, wondering, how did it all end up this way? Only I know the truth. I first met Coulton in the Fall. It was at Yale University, where we were both educated. Throughout the world Fall is known as the season of death; but for the student, the chill winds mean hope and new beginnings and surprising new friendships. One evening, some colleagues and I were sitting in a great, oak-paneled room of the many that infested the Yale campus. It was lit only by a blazing fire, and we were throwing huge glasses of brandy into it, wrapping ourselves in woolen blankets and taking refuge in discussions of four-way chessboards, frictionless bicycles, insect ESP, and other matters of the mind. Then Coulton cast open the door. Light poured in. Women were with him. He was smiling (he did not wear a beard then, and so, for a brief moment in history, his teeth were bright and visible). We cringed in our wingchairs and blankets. Coulton wasn't like us. Coulton had not come from the cities, as we had, but from the nearby Connecticut woods - a country boy with a song in his heart and a hunger for the simple things: frito-pie, cheeseburger macaroni, Donald Fagen, and marihuana. He did some kind of dance, some loathsome expression of physical joy, flipped on the lights, and a girl found the cassette player in the corner and put on his tape. Even has a teenager, Coulton had long been known in the local cafes and nutmeg houses for his songs, the simple folk tunes I heard now by the fire. It would be years still before I'd coax Coulton to write songs such as Furry Old Lobster and other songs of madness. And years still before Coulton's latent fondness

for cyborgs and Mandlebrot Sets would assert itself on his brain like a hypnotic obsession. For now it was just these plain, honest tunes of heart-want and yearning, with titles like Please Pardon My Vicissitudes and Baby Got Back (later covered by Sir Mix-a-Lot, and later still, Donald Fagen, and so the circle was complete). But he didnt call them songs. In his own, simple way, he called them things. He got a dreamy look in his eye. Some day, I would like to write a thing every week, he said. And put them on some sort of computer network. The women smiled, even the fire grew warmer and bent to him. We all knew he would do it. (Except for the madness of the computer network. That was madness.) While I sat throwing brandy across the room, this boy was riding a frictionless bicycle to his future, and oh, did I loathe him! Later, I would not loathe him. But thats another story, for another season. For now, all you need to know is that he did do it: a year of things and weeks, collected like beautiful fall leaves, pressed into an album, covered with plastic, and encoded with digital data that may be read with a laser. I hope you have the appropriate equipment to hear this album. For now I must go. There is a golden retriever loose in my home, and he has gotten into the lobster pantry. Until winter, I say: enjoy. That is all. John Hodgman Fall 2005

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