

Mp3 Kim Mclean - Rapunzel's Escape



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"Mountains-Meet-Memphis-Appalachi-Groove Music" from one of country music's stellar songwriters as she steps into the artist spotlight. 14 MP3 Songs in this album (52:51) ! Related styles: COUNTRY: Contemporary Country, COUNTRY: Americana People who are interested in Tom Petty Sheryl Crow Bonnie Raitt should consider this download. Details: Kim McLean Rapunzels Escape Overview/Liner Notes/Track by Track By PHIL SWEETLAND Music and Radio contributor The New York Times

Rapunzel, in Grimms Fairy Tales, was a lovely maiden imprisoned in a tower by an evil witch. In her loneliness, Rapunzel sings to herself, and her songs are eventually heard by a prince. The only way for the prince to reach Rapunzel and eventually free her is to use her long, golden hair as a ladder into the tower. There is indeed a song about Rapunzel here, but it never contains the phrase Rapunzels Escape. Kim McLean instead chose that phrase as the title of the album and we see that perhaps shes as much escaping to something as from something. Shes long been one of musics most gifted songwriters and producers for other artists, but Rapunzel allows Kims own remarkable gifts as an artist to take center stage. Perhaps the story began back when her music education was cruelly halted by an eating disorder that nearly cost Kim her life and forced her to withdraw soon after she was accepted to the elite piano conservatory at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro. Recently, McLean received both her Bachelors and Masters degrees with honors in just five-and-a-half years from Trevecca University, gaining her escape to that long overdue education and a position as Adjunct Professor of Songwriting.

Kim McLeans Appalachi-Groove Style Kim McLeans original musical delivery is unique, self-described as Appalachi-groove. Her heritage combines Irish, Cherokee, and Appalachian strains, all of which magically appear in her songs. As a little girl, she adored listening to her grandmother a pianist and songwriter herself play the piano, teaching Kim everything from Chopin to Fats Wallers boogie-woogie. As a result

McLeans style, sometimes beautifully summarized as Mountains-Meet-Memphis, showing up in the fact that shes not only written several Country hits but also recently contributed a song to Bettye LaVettes (The First Lady of Soul) Grammy-nominated Blues album. In the late Sixties, we began to hear about what was then a new concept in Pop music, the singer/songwriter. James Taylor, Elton John, Joni Mitchell, and Carole King emerged as early superstars of that genre. Kim has some Joni influences, along with Tom Petty and J.J. Cale, but perhaps its better to call her a Songwriter/Singer than the other way around. Her songs have always come first, and everything else stems from that creative process.

Rapunzels Escape The Musicians One of the joys of Rapunzels Escape is the opportunity to hear many of Nashvilles top session players at their very best. Yudkin combines with Russ Pahl (steel/Dobro), John D. Willis (electric guitar/mandolin/banjo), Catherine Marx and Michael Rojas (keyboards), David Hungate (bass), and Eddie Bayers Jr. (drums) to provide the perfect backgrounds for McLeans simple, yet complex, songs and her own percussive acoustic-guitar work. Rapunzels Escape Cut by Cut Its almost as if the 14 songs on Rapunzels Escape came from 14 different albums or 14 different artists but happily we find them all in once place. Great songs have come from Kims pen and soul for years, and now we get to hear them as they came to her, the songwriters rendition of her own creations, as she lived them in Rapunzels Escape. 1. Aint No Glory on the Ground (Kim McLean/Kevin Fisher) When we hear the opening line of this hooky rocker, as Kim sings life took a nosedive late last fall, we figure we may be in for some tough times. But instead, this is a song and a story of triumph, as the singer escapes the heartaches and limits of the ground and says, Pardon me if I fly. John D. Williss electric guitar is a perfect counterpart to McLeans vocal, especially in the second verse, in a very Radio-friendly song that would make a terrific single. The production, combining electric and acoustic guitars, layered vocals, and tons of hooks, is influenced as much by The Beatles as by Nashville. 2. Born To Be Happy (Kim McLean/Devon ODay) McLeans songs feature stark contrasts, and Born To Be Happy is an excellent example as the minor-key verses are subdued and longing, but the major-key choruses are joyful and rocking.

3. Rapunzel (Heart Of Heavy Stone) By Kim McLean/Lisa Brokop In Rapunzel, McLean and the fine Canadian singer and songwriter Lisa Brokop craft a Pop-flavored gem about self-doubt and eventual acceptance and self-confidence. Theres a fascinating shift in this song, from a first verse rooted in fantasy and the Rapunzel story to a second in which a mature singer separates fact from fiction and recognizes that the reality can be exciting too. Musically, this is one of Kims best pieces, especially in the unusual

climbing chords of the chorus. Lyrically, her image of counterbalancing life forces accepting the strength that the heart of heavy stone provides is another wonder.

4. Beautiful Goodbye (Kim McLean/Jennifer Hanson) This was a Top 20 Country debut single in 2002 on Capitol Nashville for Hanson, and now at last we get to hear Kims own version of it. Its sort of like finally getting to read the book on which a movie was based; we hear far more in the song than ever before.

5. All We Ever Find (Kim McLean/Liz Rose) All We Ever Find is a bittersweet ballad, emphasizing the importance of living in the moment. The singer plays the part of the listeners counselor or pastor here, urging them to say exactly how ya feel. We must take note here of the understated arrangement, which is such a pleasure to hear when we are so often bombarded with heavy, pop-driven production nowadays. Instead, Kims productions have a real sense for what to leave out as well as for what to leave in at the studio. The resulting arrangements serve as a perfect complement for Kims plaintive, always pleasing vocals.

6. Let Go Let Love (Kim McLean/Phil Swann) This song opens with a mysterious-sounding guitar, setting the stage for a verse that asks many questions and provides few answers. The answers that do come are in a big sing-able chorus that shows off her gift of commercial songwriting. A fun thing is the patterns and doubles within the song (flyin or fallin, a whisper, a need, a reaction, a beautiful emotion). This is sophisticated writing, but like all the great ones they make it sound so easy.

7. Cracks in the Concrete (Kim McLean/Lisa Brokop) This ones rockin Country, with mandolins, electric guitars, and drums providing the beat. Thats fitting for a road song celebrating freedom and escape. The singers just been through a tough break, and decides to get over it by hitting the road. Its a good-natured tune about dealing with a hard realities, and McLean has as much fun singing it as we do hearing it.

8. Elisabeth (Kim McLean/Liz Rose) How do we explain the real life tragedy and blessings of a young girl whos both beaten the odds and been beaten by them during her short life? Is a life less worth living if there is less of it to live? Doctors told Elisabeth shed never live to her sixteenth birthday, but she did. She finished school and heard this song sung around the world before she left us. Elisabeth, youre a teacher and a saint, Kim sings, touching us the way Elton Johns Daniel and Christopher Crosss Think Of Laura, beautifully did with love and loss and triumph. Kim McLean is a story-singer, and this true story in song is a perfect example.

9. A Beautiful Day With You (Kim McLean/Wally Wilson) Kim explores the harsh realities here of todays world from anorexic girls to homeless folks everywhere and wonders is this heaven or hell? Its a good question, and a very good song with a unique drive and a fun chorus technically speaking, theres nothing worth keepin but a

beautiful day with you showing McLean at her quirky smiling best. Another subtle aspect of Beautiful Day is that in the end, the only solution to the worlds grown-up problems is to act like a kid again. The final line, after all, is I just want to play with you! 10. Always Know (Kim McLean/Devon ODay) Like much of Kims best work, this song is in many ways a hymn. Always Know features one of McLeans musical specialties phrasing. Lines like each time a branch was bent or each time a moments spent provide such cool rhythmic shadings that she does almost without thinking, elevating her music to a higher place.

11. Break The Glass (Kim McLean/Jennifer Hanson) Nashville artists have written about alcoholism since the earliest days of Country and this song gives a new perspective on a very old and vexing disease. Kim tell the drinker in no uncertain terms that if he continues along the same path, he may be digging his own grave. I can only do so much, they tell him, only you can break the glass. 12. China (Kim McLean/Liz Rose) This is the most harrowing song on the album. Its the only waltz, and Jonathan Yudkins string arrangement adds a warm blanket to this sad but uplifting song. When I finally left, I left for me. When she did so, she left behind all the trappings of her earlier life a comfortable house with fine china (the origin of the title), and memories of what once was a blessed love, and a nice neighborhood with lots of friends. Nowadays, as many marriages seem to end in divorce as dont, and a moving song like China figures to help countless folks cope with a situation that often seems impossible. Waltzes are all too rare these days, but Kims musical trip to China makes us want to hear more. 13. Any Day (Kim McLean/Rick Ferrell) This is a pure rocker, with a cool Tom Petty-Fleetwood Mac-Bruce Springsteen feel like in Badlands, nice and big. Once again on Any Day, we see Kim McLeans amazing versatility. 14. Because Gods Good (Kim McLean/Dwight Wiles/Phil Johnson) Church services often close with a prayer, so a musical prayer closes this terrific album. Because is a very funky song, with a strong R&B and Southern Gospel feel. But just as Elvis took Southern Gospel and fused it with popular styles, this one has lyrics that would fit into a hymnal but joins them with music that would fit in a dance club. As always, Kim sings with great confidence. And she should be confident. Shes just made a sensational album!

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