

Joni Mitchell - Court & Spark (1974)

Written by bluelover

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1. *Court And Spark* 2. *Help Me* 3. *Free Man In Paris* 4. *People's Parties* 5. *Same Situation* 6. *Car On A Hill* 7. *Down To You* 8. *Just Like This Train* 9. *Raised On Robbery* 10. *Trouble Child* 11. *Twisted*

Joni Mitchell – vocals, including background; acoustic guitar; piano; clavinet on "Down to You", cover painting John Guerin – drums, percussion Wilton Felder – bass on "People's Parties" and "Free Man in Paris" Max Bennett – bass (on all tracks except "Free Man in Paris", "People's Parties" and "Trouble Child") Jim Hughart – bass on "Trouble Child" Milt Holland – chimes on "Court and Spark" Tom Scott – woodwinds, reeds Chuck Findley – trumpet on "Twisted" and "Trouble Child" Joe Sample – electric piano, clavinet on "Raised on Robbery" David Crosby – background vocals on "Free Man in Paris" and "Down to You" Graham Nash – background vocals on "Free Man in Paris" Susan Webb – background vocals on "Down to You" Larry Carlton – electric guitar (on all tracks except "Car on a Hill", "Raised on Robbery" and "Trouble Child") Wayne Perkins – electric guitar on "Car on a Hill" Dennis Budimir – electric guitar on "Trouble Child" Robbie Robertson – electric guitar on "Raised on Robbery" José Feliciano – electric guitar on "Free Man in Paris" Cheech Marin – background voice on "Twisted" Tommy Chong – background voice on "Twisted"

Joni Mitchell reached her commercial high point with *Court and Spark*, a remarkably deft fusion of folk, pop, and jazz which stands as her best-selling work to date. While as unified and insightful as *Blue*, the album -- a concept record exploring the roles of honesty and trust in relationships, romantic and otherwise -- moves away from confessional songwriting into evocative character studies: the hit "Free Man in Paris," written about David Geffen, is a not-so-subtle dig at the machinations of the music industry, while "Raised on Robbery" offers an acutely funny look at the predatory environment of the singles bar scene. Much of *Court and Spark* is devoted to wary love songs: both the title cut and "Help Me," the record's most successful single, carefully measure the risks of romance, while "People's Parties" and "The Same Situation" are fraught with worry and self-doubt (standing in direct opposition to the music, which is smart, smooth, and assured from the first note to the last). ---Jason Ankeny, AllMusic Review

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