

Dolly Parton – Coat of Many Colors (1971/2007)

Written by bluelover

Thursday, 29 September 2011 18:10 - Last Updated Monday, 02 January 2017 21:14

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[01] *Coat of Many Colors* 03:02 [play](#) [02] *Traveling Man* 02:35 [03] *My Blue Tears* 02:14 [04] *If I Lost My Mind* 02:27 [05] *The Mystery of the Mystery* 02:26 [06] *She Never Met a Man (She Didn't Like)* 02:40 [07] *Early Morning Breeze* 02:51

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[08] *The Way I See You* 02:43 [09] *Here I Am* 03:14 [10] *A Better Place to Live* 02:38 [11] *My Heart Started Breaking* [12] *Just As Good As Gone* [13] *The Tender Touch Of Love* [14] *My Blue Tears (Acoustic Demo)*

Personnel: - Dolly Parton – vocals, guitar - Billy Sanford, Dave Kirby, Jerry Shook, George McCormick – guitar - Pete Drake – pedal steel guitar - Bobby Dyson – bass - Jerry Carrigan – drums - Buck Trent – banjo - Mack Magaha, Johnny Gimble, Buddy Spicher – fiddle - Hargus "Pig" Robbins, David Briggs – piano - The Nashville Edition - backing vocals

Dolly Parton had a number of hits in the late '60s as Porter Wagoner's duet partner, yet solo success eluded her until her 1971 album *Coat of Many Colors*. The title track was a Top Ten single, and it effectively became her signature song, largely because it was a sweetly autobiographical tune about her childhood. That song, along with its two hit predecessors, "Traveling Man" and "My Blue Tears," were evidence that Parton was a strong songwriter, but the full album reveals the true depth of her talents. She wrote seven of the ten songs (Wagoner wrote the other three), none of which is filler. There isn't really a theme behind *Coat of Many Colors*, even if its title track suggests otherwise. Instead, it's a remarkably consistent album, in terms of songwriting and performances, but also remarkably diverse, revealing that Dolly can handle ballads, country-rockers, tearjerkers, and country-pop with equal aplomb. And while it is very short, clocking in at under a half-hour, there isn't a wasted moment on the album. It's a lean, trim album that impresses because of succinctness -- with its ten songs, it announced Parton as a major talent in her own right, not merely a duet partner. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, Rovi

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This re-release of a classic Dolly Parton album is nostalgia at its finest. The title track is probably one of the top three defining songs of Dolly Parton's career. And considering the number of albums she has recorded through the years; that is saying quite a bit. Dolly's distinctive voice and the emotion behind her lyrics make it a winner for any collection.

The album was originally released in 1971, with two of the tracks actually recorded in 1969. Legacy and Sony BMG have re-released it with four additional tracks. Eight of the ten original tracks were written by Dolly and the remaining two tracks were written by Porter Wagoner. This was a major step for Parton in proving her capabilities not only as a solo artist, but also as a credible songwriter. Dolly's lyrics have always tended to deal with personal life experiences and she was never one to shy away from things that weren't widely discussed in public. "Coat of Many Colors" is a song that has not only withstood the test of time but is a personal story of her childhood. She even turned it into a very successful children's book. But it is the story of a coat that her mother made for her. Only instead of using a single piece of material, she pieced together rags to make a coat and kids at school were very cruel when she wore it. As the coat was being made, her mama had told her the Bible story of Joseph and his coat of many colors. It made the coat even more special to the young girl, and she was very hurt at the cruel teasing from her classmates. She tried to make them understand how special it was to her to no avail. It is a beautiful song with a powerful message that will never go out of date.

As for touching on subjects that were not widely discussed in that time period, she recorded a song called "Traveling Man." This song has actually been a favorite of mine for years. First because I enjoyed the music, and later when I was older and understood the lyrics I appreciated their message as well. It's written from the point of view of a young woman who thinks she is mature and worldly, but in truth she is very inexperienced. She is sneaking around with the older man, a traveling salesman, planning on running away with him and feeling like an adult because her mama doesn't know what she's doing. Meanwhile, her mama runs off with the man and she finds out that the guy was going out with both of them at the same time. It was quite a break through song in its time as far as the lyrical content of the song. While all the songs are good, those were the two really strong songs for me. The others are all stepping stones to her blossoming style and songwriting skills. Other notable songs for me were "My Blue Tears" and "Early Morning Breeze." Overall, this is a very enjoyable album to listen to. I love the simple style of the instruments without all the electronic jazz that is a part of today's album making process. It really makes the true vocal talents of Parton stand out. This is a "must have" for your music collection. --- Jolene Downs, countrymusic.about.com

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