

Jewel – Picking Up The Pieces (2015)

Written by bluelover
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1 Love Used To Be 5:42 2 A Boy Needs A Bike 4:10 3 Everything Breaks 4:02 4 Family Tree 3:36 5 It Doesn't Hurt Right Now (Feat. – Rodney Crowell) 4:36 6 His Pleasure Is My Pain 5:43 7 Here When Gone 4:45 8 The Shape Of You 4:16 9 Plain Jane 3:50 10 Pretty Faced Fool 3:51 11 Nicotine Love 6:33 12 Carnivore 4:20 13 My Father's Daughter (Feat. – Dolly Parton) 3:25 14 Mercy 3:47

It was just over 20 years ago that an Alaskan songwriter named Jewel made her debut with *Pieces of You*, a record that carved out a perfectly confessional, coffeehouse niche between the decline of grunge and the rise of the slinky pop princess. And on September 11th, the “Who Will Save Your Soul” singer will release *Picking Up the Pieces*, *Rolling Stone Country* can exclusively confirm, her first collection of new material since 2010 and a follow-up, of sorts, to that breakthrough LP in both subject and spirit.

Jewel produced the 14-song collection herself in Nashville, recruiting an A-list session band including 2014’s ACM Guitar Player of the Year Rob McNelley and frequent Neil Young collaborators like drummer Chad Cromwell as an ode to Ben Keith, with whom she worked on *Pieces of You* and was a staple figure in the Young world before his death in 2010.

Any self-referential notes in *Picking Up the Pieces* are fully intentional: After giving birth to her son, divorcing her husband and dabbling in both children’s music and country, Jewel wanted to return to the signature stripped-down folk-pop that gave her one of the best-selling debuts of all time.

“It’s really a time capsule,” Jewel told *Rolling Stone* in a 1997 cover story about *Pieces of You*.

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“When I recorded it, I thought, ‘No one’s gonna hear it. I’m just going to be honest and put it down on tape.’ I didn’t really clean up all the edges.” It’s since been certified 12x Platinum.

Though evocative of her earliest years, Picking Up the Pieces is still also true to her country side, with “My Father’s Daughter,” a collaboration with Dolly Parton that tells the story of Jewel’s father and grandmother, the later whom emigrated from Europe and was an aspiring opera singer. Jewel released her first country album, Perfectly Clear, in 2008, and played June Carter Cash in the Lifetime TV movie Ring Of Fire. And she’s got one heck of a mountain yodel.

Picking Up the Pieces will include new songs (“Love Used to Be,” “Mercy”) as well as unrecorded tracks that have long made the rounds at Jewel’s live shows like “Carnivore” and “Boy Needs a Bike,” both of which she’s been playing since the mid-Nineties and are pure Lilith Fair-era wandering folk narratives with her signature balance of gritty growl and sweet whisper.

“My focus for this CD was to forget everything I have learned about the music business the last 20 years and get back to what my bones have to say about songs and words and feeling and meaning,” Jewel writes on her blog. “I let go of genre, radio, trend, current events, and clever strategies. I let go of it all — which was no small feat as those voices are so deeply penetrating after 20 years of doing this professionally. It took real effort to clear my thoughts and have no rules and just create.” ---Maruissa R. Moss, rollingstone.com

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