**Colbie Caillat: Along The Way**

“*It’s the rolling stone in me, not the solid rock in you...”*

The finger picking, the warm voice, the bright melodies. Colbie Caillat’s been a friend people can come home to since bursting onto the music scene with *Coco* in 2007. Millions of albums and singles sold, over 15 billion streams, two Grammys won, a #1 *Billboard* Top 200 Albums debut for her sophomore album *Breakthrough*, buoyant hits like “Realize,” “Bubbly” and “Lucky,” the #1 duet with Jason Mraz, albums *Gypsy Heart, All of You*, the stripped back *Malibu Sessions,*as well as Gone West, her roots/country group, made her a voice of joy and finding one’s place in the world.

And then…

Sometimes the real world upends one’s plans. What you think is forever, you realize might not be. But somehow, like everything else in the good-hearted, honey-voiced songwriter’s charmed life, even the upsets seem to provide lessons and new ways of accessing hope and grace.

“My core self, I think, it’s where I’m from, the family I was raised with, the music,” explains the fresh-faced songwriter of her deepest self. “Fleetwood Mac, acoustic rock, all those good songs. It’s pure sunshine.”

“As positive and optimistic as I am, I have hard days and feel hopeless. When you go through things, you feel it. When you’re happy, embrace it. When it’s bad, know it’s temporary.”

Smiling as she says this, there’s not one speck of stoic to her words. Having seen the end of her recent engagement, as well as coming into her own subsequent romantic entanglements, Caillat refused to surrender her belief that life’s good.

“My previous partner taught me the importance of the famous quote ‘This too shall pass.’ He told me, ‘When you’re happy, enjoy it completely – because it may not last. When you’re sad, know it won’t last either and that should give you some relief.’ And he’s right.”

“What I have gathered through my experience with love is that there is no shame in it. To love with your entire being knowing it could end is still worth the possible hurt because it helps us gain so much for our personal growth. Whether it’s wisdom, gratitude, or empathy, love can guide us to a more peaceful place within ourselves. And you’re helping someone else grow at the same time.”

*Along The Way,*Caillat’s solo country debut, embodies that positivity in heartbreak’s wake. Though her move to Nashville was done as one-half of a romantic partnership - a personal and professional adventure to the southern city for this west coast girl - she thrived in all of life’s changes. In her musical journey and experimentation with new sounds, Caillat vividly captured a moment in her life through song.

The California-raised, Nashville-based girl delivered songs with gratitude for having known this love, learned so many lessons and the joys shared along the way. “The love that you shared shouldn’t be wasted: you help each other grow and become a wiser and more evolved person. We needed to be together to become who we are today, even if we didn’t end up together.”

If Joni Mitchell’s quintessential *Blue* is the deep dive into the caverns of grief following a break-up, *Along The Way* is a bright, shiny compass Caillat offers to guide people through the tough times and raw feelings that accompany *any* dissolution. Lover, leaver, left, the woman who’s sung at the Nobel Peace Prize Concert wants to sow compassion for all parties involved.

“Sometimes you need a change, – and although you know it’s necessary, it comes with guilt and sometimes pain. Life makes sure you experience all sides to every emotion. I left someone, then someone left me. Both feel awful, like you’re abandoning someone, and someone is abandoning you. But in reality, neither are the case...”

Where many people would sink into karmic defaults or dark emotions, Caillat reached for her guitar. Some of these songs even tumbled out in the same tunings as “Bubbly”, lush and buoyant. The shimmering mid-tempo “Wide Open” embraces love on its terms, while knowing forever isn’t a given. She filets the reality of hanging in there with someone who’s good, but the forever’s gone on the fiddle’n’Telecaster-shaped “Pretend.” And she surrenders to wanting what’s gone on the rippling piano lament with “Blue.”

To say the ultimate free spirit has grown up may be over-reaching. While she exploded as the biggest artist on MySpace with her Topanga Canyon songs, she was a wise innocent. While building on her groundbreaking career, Caillat naturally transitioned into Gone West, breezy melody group whose myriad influences landed somewhere between Laurel Canyon, Texas roadhouses, Appalachia’s harmony, and the plains of the Midwest.​ Now she’s a grown woman in full possession of her wonder - which means she can understand and still live with the unknowing, the falter and figuring it out. Living and working in Music City now for over six years, she has discovered a fresh songwriter inside herself who is ready to share her new perspectives.

The slithering “Buying Time” is the inertia of maintaining what’s ultimately over, professing “the *letting go gets harder babe, the longer that we wait...,”* while the organ clouds that rise up and the gospel chorus on the affirming confession “Worth It” realizes how powerful what didn’t work was. As she marvels, “There’s the going back and forth of holding onto the good parts, where you ask, ‘If this isn’t bad, why would we end it?’ But there’s also that idea that if it’s going to fall apart, why force it to hold together? And that’s what ‘Buying Time’ is, something that borrows some of that ‘Slow Dancing in a Burning Room’ feeling.”

“Then ‘Worth It,’ when AJ and I added those harmonies, it just opened up and it took on this feeling. It was so optimistic and loving, which is exactly what I wanted it to express. There’s that line: ‘it wasn’t just me I did it for*...’* because I wanted my ex to be with his best person, too.”

7X chart-topping songwriter AJ Pruis (“AJ”) and Hall-of-Fame, GRAMMY-winning songwriter Liz Rose were frequent collaborators of Caillat for this new project. The trio dug deep to tell Caillat’s story through her current musical lens – nearly a decade of living, writing, and performing in Nashville. She organically gravitated to a country record though fans may not notice a big difference as her songwriting has always lent itself to the genre.

Magnanimous to a fault, Caillat puts her songs where her truth is. “For Someone,” with its sinewy guitar twists and Hammond B-3 parts, addresses the way people make their former partners better for the next person their ex falls for.

“One of my friends was over a year and a half ago, and we in the jacuzzi talking about the guys we’d put in all this effort with, and now they’re with someone else. They were kind of a better version for someone else, and we hoped someone was doing that with someone else for us.”

Pass it on. The momentum of creating love and helping someone grow. Recognizing how far people can come, knowing that we don’t always see the ultimate ending is an acceptance that you can’t see in the moment. “Two Birds” expresses that love isn’t about possessing another, but letting them be, even as “Still Gonna Miss You” owns that for all that’s wrong, it doesn’t negate what you loved. Even the campfire folk picking of “I’ll Be Here,” originally recorded as “Never Gonna Let You Down” on *Gypsy Heart*, suggests what love can be.

“I wrote that years ago about the ones you love being a safe space. I have been lucky enough to find that safe space with my family, friends, and those who I've loved for a period of time. Love doesn’t stop. You want people to know they’re never alone, and you’ll be there for them when they need you.”

When she speaks, it sounds so easy. In a world that rises up and crashes down, Caillat almost makes heartbreak seem easily weathered. She allows, “I actually think this is ultimately a sad record. My parents actually asked, ‘Honey, do you think you want to write some happier songs?’ But these songs are all important perspectives of the ebbs and flows of relationships. I’m only just recently at a place where I feel ready to release them, to help heal people going through the same experiences that I did. That’s what I love about music and songwriting, it connects us and helps us realize we aren’t alone in what we go through in life.”

“Be grateful for good days and remind yourself to be grateful for the other days when you learn things. Happiness *is* a choice; sometimes we need to stop ourselves from running with those dark thoughts.”

She pauses, measuring the margins and the growth she’s experienced. Recognizing expressing the truth gives people permission to feel their own feelings, her self-awareness shines through.

“Sometimes when I listen to my old songs, I feel so young, that inexperienced happy-go-lucky person, this person the world met. But when I’m in that fresh dating mode, I realize she’s still there.”

“When you meet someone with a teeny spark or a huge spark, it’s starting all over again. That’s the truth: I’m absolutely excited for love and the hope that comes with it. I’ve loved a couple times, had a bunch of sparks, I’ve broken hearts and my hearts been broken too. Now I’m trying to live in a headspace where I’m OK with what is, what is meant for me, not forcing anything, and it’s a pretty sweet space to live.”