

Bon Jovi - Burning Bridges (2015)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 03 November 2015 16:52 - Last Updated Saturday, 25 November 2017 09:59

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01. *A Teardrop To The Sea* (5:07) 02. *We Don't Run* (3:17) 03. *Saturday Night Gave Me Sunday Morning* (3:23) 04. *We All Fall Down* (4:05) 05. *Blind Love* (4:48) 06. *Who Would You Die For* (3:54) 07. *Fingerprints* (5:58) 08. *Life Is Beautiful* (3:44) 09. *I'm Your Man* (2:44) 10. *Burning Bridges* (4:34) Jon Bon Jovi – lead vocals, acoustic guitar, backing vocals David Bryan – keyboards, piano, backing vocals Tico Torres – drums, percussion, backing vocals Hugh McDonald – bass, backing vocals + John Shanks - guitars, background vocals (track 2, 4) Lorenza Ponce — string arranger and viola/violin/cello (track 5) Mike Rew - backing vocals (track 10)

Labeled not as a new record but a "fan album," 2015's *Burning Bridges* contains, in Jon Bon Jovi's words, "songs that weren't finished, that were finished, a couple of new ones." Usually, this kind of hodgepodge is called a contractual obligation or a stopgap, but "fan album" not only sounds kinder, it also identifies precisely the audience that would be interested in this brief, power ballad-heavy collection. In a way, *Burning Bridges* clears the deck for a new incarnation of Bon Jovi, the first where guitarist Richie Sambora is no longer part of the equation. Sambora gets a co-credit on "Saturday Night Gave Me Sunday Morning," a song dating back to *The Circle* that's easily one of the liveliest things here, rivaled by "I'm Your Man," which punches like it was left over from *New Jersey*. Elsewhere, things are pretty turgid, as Bon Jovi tries in vain to splice Coldplay with Springsteen in an attempt to scale previously unheard heights in arena rock. The sound is there but not the songs. Apart from "Fingerprints," which benefits from a hint of 12-strings from "Wanted Dead or Alive," these seven songs have no flair and virtually no melody, a pretty clear indication that Bon Jovi completed *Burning Bridges* out of a sense of obligation, not inspiration, but just in case you missed the point he lays it all out in the closing title song. Here, Jon Bon Jovi doesn't mince words about his label, singing "After 30 years of loyalty, they let you dig the grave/Now maybe you can learn to sing or even strum along/Well I'll give you half the publishing, you're why I wrote this song," then delivering the coup de grace with the chorus: "Here's a last song you can sell/Let's call it *Burning Bridges*, it's a singalong as well...hope my money and my masters buy a front-row seat in hell." Not since Graham Parker snarled about "Mercury Poisoning" has a rocker not bothered with parting niceties to his benefactors, and the venom invigorates Jon Bon Jovi, allowing him to write a nagging melody

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that immediately hooks under the skin and revealing just what a slog the rest of this fare-thee-well actually is. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, allmusic.com

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