



Joni Mitchell's new album will mean more to some than to others.

Amy Foster, twenty-three years old and quietly beautiful, was sitting in her orange inflatable chair listening to Neil Young's second album and toying indifferently with the enormous antique ring on the index finger of her left hand. Mostly she was trying with the usual lack of success to avoid lapsing into that state of bored listlessness she'd found herself in so frequently of late as she waited for the Country Store delivery boy to arrive with her groceries and RIT, with which she planned to pass the evening by tie-dyeing some curtains for her '64 Chevy camper.

To say simply that she had been under the weather these past few days would have been to wildly understate the case. Indeed, ever since she had been told on Sunday night by a mutual acquaintance that David, who had left her a month ago in favor of some chick he had met at the Jeans West shop he managed, had up and married, Amy had been more than a little inclined to chucking everything in the back of her camper and taking off for indefinite points north to try to get her head

back together. Today, of course, was no exception: "I'm incredibly down, man," she observed to herself as the turntable's arm lifted quietly off "Down By The River" and someone began knocking impatiently at the back door.

It was the delivery boy. After depositing her groceries on the kitchen table he stopped to admire the Van Morrison collage she had made, so Amy offered him some tea. This he accepted with a gracious and endearing toothy smile.

As they sat in the living room sipping Constant Comment with orange honey mixed in and listening to side one of *Deja Vu* he, whose name turned out to be Barry, took out a concise little joint, lit it and took a couple of polite hits, and passed it over to Amy. "Mellow," she responded, her spirits lifting slightly.

"Hey, you really have a far-out system here," Barry commented in reference to her stereo set-up as she handed the joint back. "Do you think we could listen to some of Joni Mitchell's new album on it," for he had purchased *Ladies*

of the Canyon at the Music Hall just that afternoon. "Hey, groovy," agreed Amy, who had not even realized that the album had been released.

So Barry brought it in and placed it on the turntable. By the time "For Free" was over they were both quite mellow indeed. As much as they downed her by reminding her all too vividly of her now-irrevocably-consummated relationship with David, "Willy" and "Conversation" were somehow reassuring—there was someone else, even another canyon lady, who really knew. Amy began to feel a little better.

By the time "Circle Game" had finished, Amy was no longer dejectedly contemplating splitting for Oregon. In fact, she could scarcely wait for the sun to get through setting so she could drive up to the top of Lookout and watch Los Angeles twinkle beneath the indigo April sky.

Joni Mitchell's *Ladies of the Canyon*
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