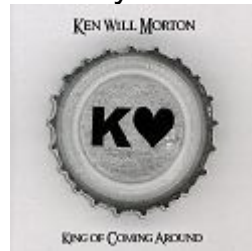


HARP®

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Ken Will Morton *King of Coming Around*

Ken Will Morton's résumé includes the pop crunch of Wonderlust and the roots-punk verve of the Indicators, but it was his roots-blues 2004 debut solo album, *In Rock 'n' Roll's Hands*, that had critical tongues wagging and musical palm readers predicting bigger things for the singer-songwriter. For his sophomore album, *King of Coming Around*, Morton delivers on his debut's potential by simply painting his proven material in progressively deeper shades of his influences and experiences. With a gritty, Dylanesque rasp and a passionate understanding of the common threads of roots-rock, blues and country, Morton triangulates a position between the Bottlerockets' full bore Americana ("Vainglorious"), Steve Earle's edgy country ("Fit to Be Tied") and the Drive-By Truckers' similarly toned and tuned neo-Southern rock ("Make Believe Love"). Like a translator enamored of all of the nuanced languages he's learned, Ken Will Morton taps into the very essence of the genres he knows and loves.

By [Brian Baker](#)

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By *Holly Gleason*

Ken Will Morton has a voice like an old raincoat worn over a baggy pair of pants with a taped-up pair of old boots. Broken-in to the point of almost decay, nothing feels so good, so broke-in, so much an article of one's life – and it's in the depth of willing to be what he is, settle in and honor the life experience that's left him dented and a little crippled that the golden hope of getting through it shines through.

With chiming acoustic guitars surging through a pretty classic Americana garage band set-up and throaty harmonica darting through the waves of pastoral crunch, King of Coming Around is the bitter(sweet) harvest of a progressive rock/punk songwriter crawling from the wreckage with enough grace to make Tom Waits and Paul Westerberg proud.

With the loping "Fit to Be Tied" opening the set with its good-natured jettisoning expectations in the name of one's own true inner compass, Morton succumbs to love's draws, lust's tug, friends' foibles, demons that drag you down, telling the truth even when it stings, only to close the circle with the surviving into thriving title track that's offered up with a twinging rasp and the smile stoicism of one who's seen the worst and has no concern about the bottom.

In today's world, hope grounded in how it is rather than honest portraits, rather than polaroids of unicorns, and emotions that're cracked and patched together can offer more thrills – especially when delivered with serious downstrokes on the acoustic, sweeping melodies and chorus hooks that capture – than your garden variety pop record. Evoking the best of Nick Lowe, Morton's King of Coming Around delivers with a bruised and battered heart on his sleeve.