

## Patty Griffin – Silver Bell (2013)

Written by blueslover

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01 – *Little God* 02 – *Truth #2* 03 – *Boston* 04 – *Perfect White Girls* 05 – *Sooner Or Later*  
06 – *What You Are* 07 – *Silver Bell* 08 – *Fragile* 09 – *Mother of God* 10 – *One More Girl* 11 –  
*Sorry and Sad* 12 – *Driving* 13 – *Top of the World* 14 – *So Long* Musicians: Patty Griffin -  
Guitar, Piano, Vocals Jay Joyce - Guitar, Producer Doug Lancio - Guitar John Deaderick -  
Keyboards Frank Swart – Bass Billy Beard – Drums Emmylou Harris - Vocals (Background)

Shelved during of the great record label consolidation of the early 2000s, Patty Griffin's *Silver Bell* is indeed a "lost album" but it is not one that carries mythic weight. Griffin rebounded relatively quickly after *Silver Bell*'s abandoned release -- two years later, she signed with ATO and released *1000 Kisses*, the first in a series of regular records all receiving greater acclaim and stronger sales -- and *Silver Bell* itself strengthened her reputation and bank account due to covers by the Dixie Chicks, who cut "Top of the World" and "Truth #2" on 2002's *Home* (over a decade later, Natalie Maines once again returned to this album for its title track, recording "Silver Bell" for her 2013 solo debut, *Mother*). If the Chicks' covers suggest that the album has a strong country flavor, that's not necessarily wrong, but there's a roiling rock undertow tempered by a smoky, late-night soulfulness that gives this album its emotional resonance. These sounds are not mutually exclusive. Often, Griffin blends it all together, pushing a song that starts as country into bracing, cathartic territory, a trick that is an outgrowth of *Flaming Red*. Despite the success the Dixie Chicks had with songs from this album, *Silver Bell* is not necessarily a record that would've brought Griffin to a larger audience. It is simultaneously inward and explosive, a record that demands close listening and certainly rewards the attention. Griffin may have gotten a little more accessible not much later, but it's hard to hear *Silver Bell* and not think of it as a compelling transitional LP that's the missing piece of the puzzle, the moment when Patty Griffin inadvertently learned that the hard road not only resulted in a rewarding journey, but it was the road she was destined to take. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, Rovi

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