



True Love and Water

[Erica Buettner](#)

Peppermoon Music - PM001CD

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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Erica Buettner's being lauded as a figure in the new avant-folk scene, and the accolade's appropriate, as she carries very chambery sensibilities about with her, crafting fare that continues a tradition too scantily attended. Though it's true Buettner shares atmospheres with Leonard Cohen, the kindredness to Dylan being touted by some is inappropriate though the relation to early Joni Mitchell is certainly on the money, as cuts like the title track well evince...but blended with a bit of Joni's more experimental later era, perhaps circa *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* or thereabouts. There's also, though, more than an echo of Marianne Faithfull and Nico, darkness crowding in everywhere. Then I hear more than a little Pearls Before Swine, a long-lost but once critically acclaimed group from which Tom Rapp created a too short solo side career. I doubt Buettner ever heard them—hell, almost no critics have and we're supposed to be compendious in our supposedly studious craft—but the kindred atmospherics are striking.

Every song but one is written by Erica, and she chose wisely in selecting producer/musician Pierre Faa to arrange the whole affair, resulting in a hinterlands-baroque affair that hovers poetically and sonically between Dylan Thomas and Poe. Consider this stanza:

*Crying won't get you home
But you won't get a dime without crying
Life's greatest balancing act is to sell
Fewer tears than you're buying*

This is only one of many very wry observances pregnant with wit and turns of phrase and semantics, the sort of phrasings that stop people in their tracks, forcing minds to interact with art, creating that inner conflict our English Lit 101 professors extolled. Buettner's vocal seasonings, though, are a cross between songbird and dirge encanted from a novo-Victorian rostrum of aged oak and filigree as clearly limned dolorous instruments articulate reminiscences and portents, patient, knowing, reconciled to the ghosts and shadows drifting through, Erica's intricate guitar patterns embroidering clouds and hazy sunlight. If you've been pining for the classicalist side of the avant-garde mixing Sylvia Plath with Elizabethan antiquities, this is exactly the place your feet have trod to reach...but don't sit down to rest. You might never get up again.

Track List:

- Time Travelling
- True Love and Water
- Under the Radar
- When it Goes
- Arctic Dogs
- Our Most Fragile Things
- No Land's Man
- Body Electric
- A Tale of Norstein
- Outro

All songs written by Erica Buettner except *A Tale of Norstein* (Stefanos Kotsanis).

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