

New album: I AM RACHEL PLATTEN

When the world first met Emmy Award-winning multi-platinum artist, singer, songwriter, Rachel Platten, it came in the form of a proclamation of self. An anthem for those who needed it and those who didn't even know they needed it alike, "Fight Song" became a global sensation, an inescapable battle cry that's now been streamed more than a billion times and is as inextricable to modern culture as any one song could be.

But "Fight Song" was just one song, oneself, and Rachel Platten had so much more to say, and so many more selves to show. These days, if you dive headfirst into Rachel's rich and growing catalogue, your odds are as strong to land on a thundering anthem like her biggest hit as they are to hit a soul-searching, scar-bearing, lyrically textured stunner about motherhood, guilt, mourning, expectations, rebirth, mental health, and the support systems we all need to guide us through life's most earth-shaking curveballs.

You'll find all that and so much more on Rachel Platten's latest studio album *I Am Rachel Platten*, a body of work over five years in the making. *I Am Rachel Platten* is an artistic journey through life's peaks and valleys. It's a record about grief as much as it is using darkness to help better shape and contextualize the light. "For so long, I wasn't dealing with what was underneath the surface," Rachel says. "I wasn't in touch with the darkness. I hadn't gone to therapy. I'd achieved my dreams but inside, I was dealing with anxiety and depression that I didn't know or acknowledge was there."

With songs written during sharply defined periods of her life – including the pregnancy and ensuing postpartum depression following the birth of her first daughter, Violet; as ways of searching for answers, relief, and hope throughout a prolonged mental health struggle during the pandemic; in response to her partner's own fight to stay afloat while she was pregnant with their second daughter, Sophie; and, finally, on the other side of all that turmoil, with some clarity and hindsight to help her pick up all her pieces – Rachel felt ready to follow up 2017's *Waves* with an unflinching and honest album that told her story truthfully and transparently, no matter how frightening that felt in the process of making it. "I started therapy and I started looking at myself and realizing how much I was spiritually bypassing," she says. "The world has only seen this one side of me, this strength – empowering, positive, loving, warm, everything's okay, – and it wasn't fake by any means, but it was just only one part of me."

Emotions like rage and exhaustion bubbled to the surface; old wounds and new alike rose up, catching Rachel's breath in her throat, surprising her in their intensity and insistence on being heard and turned into lyrics. "For a while I'd gotten so used to dimming my light for other people, but on this album, I got to heal by using music as my outlet," she says. Some nights – her hardest nights – lyrics would hit her like a ton of bricks; she'd run to the piano in her home studio and seek relief in songwriting. The process yielded "Mercy," one of the album's rawest and emotion-baring moments, a song that "proved there's a purpose for your pain," Rachel says. "There is always a purpose for what you're going through. It showed me I can make meaning out of it."

"When I first moved into this house," she adds, twirling her camera around the room, "I was laying out in the backyard looking up at these massive sycamore trees, and I was like, 'I wonder what I'm going to write next.' And I heard this voice, which I took to be my higher self, say, 'Oh, you're going to write the most powerful music of your life.'"

You'll find special spiritual meaning made throughout *I Am Rachel Platten*. "A lot of this music was me developing my relationship with my creator and with God," she says. Tracks like "I Know" and "Mercy" and "Surrender" make up an "unintentional" holy trilogy of faith-seeking and healing songs, "a hero's journey of someone wrestling with their demons," as she puts it. Her voice and pen became a conduit, Rachel says, a vessel for the lyrics and messages handed down to her from a higher place.

Early songs like “I Know” (written during the pandemic’s earliest and most uncertain moments as a message of peace to herself) and “I’ll Be Her” (a premonition of a stronger Rachel yet to come) broke the dam. With the songs beginning to flow through her — she knew she needed producing partners who could help her holistically complete the project from start to finish. One-off pairings wouldn’t work for this record, she says; it needed to be one vision, aligned with hers, who she could walk down the road with hand-in-hand. Thus, it was fate, she says, that after an impromptu set at the famed Los Angeles venue The Hotel Café in 2022, Rachel’s longtime friend and producer Jason Evigan joined her backstage with fellow producer Gian Stone; they asked her to produce “Mercy,” a song from I Am Rachel Platten which she’d debuted live as part of her set.

“I countered with, “No, but you can produce the whole album,”” she remembers with a grin. Though the pair turned down the offer, a month later, they called her with a pitch. “I remember they sounded so excited, and they told me they had the whole thing mapped out: a studio in Nashville, all these studio musicians they’d hand-selected – people who’d worked on albums like Kacey Musgraves’s Golden Hour – and a timeframe. They said they believed in me, they believed in the album, and they wanted to plunge into it headfirst with me.”

Over the course of two separate marathon sessions in Nashville, Rachel and her producers and session players crafted a body of material as sonically rich, enveloping, and impactful as it is lyrically tender, personal, and intimate. I Am Rachel Platten could only exist in its mastery because “I know myself now,” she says, a fire glowing in her eyes. “I am a mother. I am 42. I am fully in touch with myself. I’ve integrated the dark and the light in me. Now I can hold space for all of what I’m feeling now. It was too much for me before – I was just a kid. But now I have the maturity and the wisdom and my own connection to now invite my listeners in to feel their own connection, whatever that looks like, not what I think it should look like. I call it God. You can call it whatever you want, whatever is you getting back to your identity. I feel why I’m on this earth is reconnecting people to their identity, their truth, to their purpose, to their power.”