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Aside from his prodigious talents as a hot-picking multi-instrumentalist and affecting vocalist, Shawn Camp is the very model of the Americana artist: a musician who so subtly blends bluegrass, country, folk, blues, and new acoustic music that he is able to fit into--or transcend--any of those categories at will. And as a songwriter whose fans include bluegrass royalty Ralph Stanley and Del McCoury, with such mainstream artists as Garth Brooks, Brooks & Dunn, and Josh Turner taking his songs up the charts (Turner features this album's grassy "Would You Go With Me" on his sophomore CD) the Arkansas native crafts new tunes with roots that go so deep into the genre they might be mistaken for classics. Here, the title song, as well as "Love Crazy," "Fallin' for You," and "Nothin' to Do With You," explore the head-swirling pain and passion that come with emotional heart trouble, while "Drank" and "Just as Dead Today" turn on smart, backwoods humor. And there are surprises: "Waitin' for the Day to Break" recalls Johnny Cash in his American Recordings period. Alternately sweet ("Love Ain't Leavin'") and sardonic ("Hotwired"), this album reaffirms Camp's place as one of modern country's most authentic, if underrated, creative practitioners.

--Alanna Nash