








STEVIE NICKS

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Of all the singer-songwriters to emerge from the '70s, few embody the contrast of confidence and vulnerability like Stevie Nicks. Born in Arizona, where she learned country duets with her grandfather as a child, Nicks (along with her then-partner, singer/guitarist Lindsey Buckingham) went on to help transform Fleetwood Mac from a British blues band into one of the most influential pop groups of all time. She brought a sense of softness and sophistication to rock music at a time when it was still primarily considered the province of youth culture. Her best-known turns with Fleetwood Mac—"Rhiannon," "Dreams," "Landslide"—proved that pop could be both feminine and powerful, earthbound yet mystical. Nicks helped close the distance between our notions of artist and star—and inspired a generation of women from Madonna and Courtney Love to Taylor Swift and Beyoncé to do the same. For as accessible as they are, Nicks' songs are also symbolic, even mythological, springing from what seems like a world lurking somewhere beyond our own: Her 1981 solo debut, *Bella Donna*, mixes a rootsy, unvarnished sound with images of demons, dreams, mountains, and doves—an especially perceptive blend for an era when spirituality and self-realization were creeping into the mainstream. Ultimately, though, it's Nicks' connection to—and evocation of—the dualities and subtleties of womanhood that define her music: "My mission maybe wasn't to be a mom and wife," she reflected in an interview with ABC's *Downtown*. "Maybe my particular mission was to write songs to make moms and wives feel better."