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Caitlin Canty grew up two houses down from me in rural Vermont. Caitlin and my little sister were childhood best friends. We used to ride bikes all summer. And, she just recorded one of the most beautiful, touching, and well-crafted albums I've heard in years.

I keep trying to forget that we have all this shared history so I can hear this album with new ears, but it's no use. These songs perfectly articulate a trajectory many of us from our small town took – moving from the quiet streets of our neighborhood to the noise and chaos of the city, fumbling through relationships, figuring stuff out, landing somewhere. I listen to this record and I'm so glad that it exists.

Caitlin herself has been living in New York for the last few years, and she wears it well. Her song writing has become confident, honed, and immediate. "Don't you smile at me with that cracked farm-boy grin / but now that I think about it any guardian angel of mine has got to be missing some teeth" she sings on "Halo", the album's opener. The title track "Neon Streets" literally calls out all the distractions of her life in the city, but she admits bittersweetly that it's the life she's leading: "Birds are competing with my neighbor's TV / I can't hear myself think / I'd rather be singing in city cacophony than sitting here silently on my poor man's balcony with no fire to escape..."

The production is pitch perfect, featuring some subtle and beautiful playing by the members of string-rock quintet [Darlingside](#). It takes a good ear to practice restraint, and this record is full of it. Just the right amount of percussion. A perfect string arrangement. The pulsing reversed kick drum and cello on "Thin Moon" sound like they came from another planet, but somehow feel absolutely necessary to play supporting cast to Caitlin's haunting vocals.

And those vocals. Right up front, crystal clear. Seeing Caitlin play live is always an intimate experience, this is the next best thing. I've listened to this record on my commute into work, and it's as if the traffic slows down around me. Her voice and lyrics quietly demand to be listened to.

There's a moment at the end of the record, about two-thirds of the way through "Carried Away" that gets me every time. I'm not sure if I'm the only one hearing this, but I swear it's there for a reason. Just after Caitlin finishes singing the second chorus, the guitar trails off like it's going to end. Then, she digs hard into the strings and begins another verse, and you can hear a soft inhale of breath over the acoustic guitar. Almost as if to briefly center and prepare for the next section of the song, which tumbles out until the record ends with the line "Chords ring through marrow / sound shot like an arrow into bone / I'm home".

Absolute, bonafide goosebumps.

Buy Caitlin Canty's record "Neon Streets" [here](#). Like, right now. You can listen to it there too... And go see a show – the only thing better than this record is seeing her play live.

See Cara Sutherland's beautiful artwork for the record [here](#).