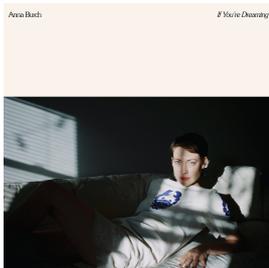


Brainwashed - Anna Burch, "If You're Dreaming"

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Anna Burch is the singular creative force behind so-called "bummer pop" album *If You're Dreaming*. This album is a departure from Burch's earlier effort, and one that shows off her stylistic breadth and thematic depth. In contrast to the high energy first album, for this release she slips into the fireside armchair and contemplates feelings and relationships, rocking gently and raising in inquiring brow. It's a relaxation of pace that I much prefer, and every song on the release is an instant favorite.

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If You're Dreaming is within the musical lineage of one of my most beloved artists—Hope Sandoval. The song "Jacket" is eerily similar to that earlier pioneer, with its reverberating electric guitars enclosed in atmosphere and mystery, propelled by narcotic female vocals. It's music that I will always associate with a dock on a lake, an empty dingy chained to the end. It's a little forlorn, and a little lost in thought, with just enough restless energy to keep it moving.

Standard four piece rock instrumentation comprise the majority of these songs, with splashes of keys and effects. Burch's vocals are mellow and unadorned, except for the occasional harmonizing overdubs. The lyrics are like a conversation had with a friend, gently chiding with lines like: "Even if I could read you / Would you believe / Does it somehow feel good / Being misunderstood," and "There is someone to love / Is that what you're dreaming of?" The backing band cradles her personal musings nicely, meandering easily through pop rock and the odd jazz chord, all with the same tenderness that the singing evokes.

It's a beautiful album for getting cozy and contemplating. I'm excited to have been introduced to Anna Burch right at the moment when she seems to be creatively stretching. She's someone to watch.

[samples available here](#)