Rory Gallagher - Calling Card (1976)

1. Do You Read Me 5:20
2. Country Mile 3:18
3. Moonchild 4:48
4. Calling Card 5:24
5. I 'll Admit You 're Gone 4:25
6. Secret Agent 5:45
7. Jack-Knife Beat 7:04
8. Edged In Blue 5:31
9. Barley & Grape Rag 3:39
10. Rue The Day 4:14
11. Public Enemy 4:33

Musicians Rory Gallagher – vocals, guitar and harmonica Gerry McAvoy – bass guitar Lou Martin – keyboards Rod de'Ath – drums

Gallagher's second album for Chrysalis -- and last with his longstanding trio of Lou Martin (keyboards), Rod De'Ath (drums) and Gerry McAvoy (bass) -- was a milestone in his career. Although Calling Card was produced by Deep Purple bassist Roger Glover and not surprisingly contained some of his most powerfully driving rockers, tracks like the acoustic "Barley & Grape Rag" and the jazzy, soulful, finger snapping title cut -- a perennial concert favorite -- found the Irish rocker not only exploring other musical paths, but also caught him on one of his most consistent songwriting streaks ever. Even "Do You Read Me," the muscular opening track, is a remarkably stripped-down affair that adds subtle synths to the rugged blues rock that was Gallagher's claim to fame. While "Moonchild," "Country Mile," and "Secret Agent" displayed catchy hooks, engaging riffs, and raging guitar work (the latter adds a touch of Deep Purple's Jon Lord-styled organ to the proceedings), it's the elegant ballad "I'll Admit You're Gone" that shifts the guitarist into calmer waters and proves his melodic talent was just as cutting on quieter tunes. And it's a crime that the gorgeous "Edged in Blue," certainly one of the artist's saddest and most beautiful pop melodies, was overlooked in his catalog. The 1999 reissue sports track-by-track and first person liner notes from Gallagher's brother Donal, crisp

remastered sound, and two additional songs not included on previous versions, one of which, "Public Enemy (B-Girl Version)," later appeared on the Photo-Finish album in an inferior performance to this. Arguably Rory Gallagher's finest studio effort, it was among his best and most varied batch of songs, and it is a perfect place for the curious to start their collection as well as an essential disc showing Gallagher at the peak of his powers. --- Hal Horowitz, Rovi

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