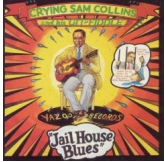


Sam Collins – Jailhouse Blues (1990)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 30 December 2014 16:58 -

Sam Collins – Jailhouse Blues (1990)



1. *Devil in the Lion's Den* (2:43) 2. *Slow Mama Slow* (3:05) 3. *The Jail House Blues* (2:32)
4. *Riverside Blues* (2:37) 5. *New Salty Dog* (2:58) 6. *Yellow Dog Blues* (2:31) 7. *Pork Chop Blues* (2:39)
8. *Dark Cloudy Blues* (2:48) 9. *Hesitation Blues* (2:40) 10. *It Won't Be Long* (2:40)
11. *Do That Thing* (2:33) 12. *I Want to Be Like Jesus in My Heart* (2:48) 13. *Loving Lady Blues* (2:42)
14. *Midnight Special Blues* (2:40) 15. *Lead Me All the Way* (2:42) 16. *Graveyard Digger's Blues* (3:16) Sam Collins - Guitar, Vocals

Known as "Crying" Sam Collins, after the eerie, falsetto quality of his voice, the artist in fact had many nicknames. A rather prolific recording artist, less than half of the 50 sides he cut saw release. Often the same tune would crop up on different labels necessitating a variety of pseudonyms (including "Bunny Carter," "Big Boy Woods," and "Salty Dog Sam"). Jailhouse Blues collects the bulk of the guitarist's commercially released output. Perhaps not as expressive or emotionally exhilarating as the "hard" Mississippi Delta singers, Collins' voice has an accessible, undeniable beauty. His guitar accompaniment proves a mastery of the basic slide and fingerpicking skills, delivered with a rough but pleasant style. These elements were combined with a compelling set of influences (intentional or otherwise) that came together in his music. For one, Collins probably picked up a lot from listening to recordings and performers from the area. His songs are filled with common, stock blues phrases delivered without a great degree of personal reconfiguring. "Hesitation Blues," a popular song from the period, is given a raw, swift rendition. The guitar line follows his singing, but he ends his phrases with deep, hard chords that contrast his high vocal. Other songs are approached in a similar manner. On "Midnight Special," the pace is almost rushed. Collins' vocal on both songs bears a striking resemblance to Skip James (at times, Collins actually sounds strikingly like a woman). The connection is made stronger by the fact that Collins' "Lead Me All the Way" has been performed by James as "Jesus Is a Mighty Good Leader." More unusual, however, are the strains of white music that run through Collins' style of Mississippi blues. On "It Won't Be Long," for instance, his characteristic vibrato and natural blues phrasing are less prominent, creating a bizarre mix of white and black delivery. ---Nathan Bush, Rovi

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