

Robert Pete Williams - Free Again (1961)

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01. *Free Again* 02. *Almost Dead Blues* 03. *Rolling Stone* 04. *Two Wings* 05. *A Thousand Miles From Nowhere* 06. *Thumbing A Ride* 07. *I've Grown So Ugly* 08. *Death Blues* 09. *Hobo Worried Blues* 10. *Hay Cutting Song* Robert Pete Williams – guitar, vocals

In 1959, blues singer/guitarist Robert Pete Williams was residing in Angola Prison, serving a life sentence for a murder he claimed he committed in self-defense, when he was discovered by blues researchers Harry Oster and Richard Allen. Immediately struck by the power of Williams' blues, the pair commenced the recordings that would appear on the collections Robert Pete Williams, Vol. 1 & 2 (including the stunning "Prisoner's Talking Blues"). Subsequent efforts by Oster and Allen led to Williams' release. No longer surrounded by the bars of Angola, the singer found himself trapped instead by the strict rules and regulations of his harsh parole. Thus on *Free Again*, the singer walks the streets like a stranger with death on his mind. "You know I walk along and talk to myself," he declares in "Death Blues," remembering his confinement. "Sometimes I have a mind to leave this place/But they say, you know you're doing time." In "A Thousand Miles From Nowhere," Williams finds himself alone on the streets of a "one horse town." Settling down for the night, he sings with a "tombstone for my pillow and the fairground for my bed." Sitting on the roadside in "Thumbing a Ride," he finds that the cars just pass him by as if he didn't exist. Despite the constant, restless movement of Williams' guitar lines, these recordings have a stillness to them, as if the reverberation of his blunt, heavy attack might be the only sound for miles around. Intimately recorded by Oster himself, these ten solo guitar and vocal performances represent some of the finest of Williams' career and some of the best the blues has to offer. ---Nathan Bush, Rovi

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