

# ALICE MOORE

## 'LONESOME WOMAN BLUES'

'St. Louis lies west of the Mississippi River, its main thoroughfare running East-West from the waterfront. The principal Negro areas lie in the older parts of the City close to Downtown St. Louis and from Washington north, Lucas, Delmar, Franklin, Cole, Carr, Biddle, O'Fallon and Cass run parallel to each other - streets whose names are familiar from the words and titles of many blues that have been recorded by the innumerable blues singers and musicians who lived and worked in the densely populated area' (7).

Alice Moore was probably born there in 1903. Of her pre-recording days nothing is known. On 16th August 1929 she turned up in Richmond, Indiana to make her first recordings for Paramount. Accompanied by trombonist Ike Rodgers (c.1903-1941) and pianist Henry Brown (1906-1981) Alice recorded four songs and provided some vocal comment on four solo recordings by her accompanists.

'At sixteen Henry Brown was playing regularly in bars and at rent parties and shortly after he made a firm friendship with a man few years his senior, Ike Rodgers, who played rough 'gutbucket' trombone with a variety of tin cans, liquor glasses and other mutes of his own devising. Their friendship lasted until Rodgers' death in 1941 and throughout the years they played together, sometimes alone, sometimes in the company of Lawrence 'Papa Egg Shell' Casey a guitarist, or Earle Bindley on drums. Amongst the many places where they recorded the '9-0-5 Club', the 'Blue Flame', 'Jim's Place' on 23rd and Market, and particularly 'Katie Red's' in East St. Louis are outstanding in his memory. At many of these they accompanied Mary Johnson (cf Agram AB 2014), Little Alice Moore, Robert Peeples and other blues singers from the district' (7).

The first Alice Moore recording, **Black and Evil Blues**, became her trademark. a desperate song about a woman who thinks she is cursed and who does neither trust herself nor her boyfriends. She recorded four versions of it in 1929, 1934, 1935 and 1937. This original version of 1929 was covered by Lil Johnson for Vocalion 03374 on 16th September 1936. The song is in the standard Alice Moore arrangement of a four bar intro, two verses, an instrumental break, two more verses and an ending of the standard turnaround of the last two bars. The four songs of the first session are all in the key of B-flat, Alice's favourite key when Henry Brown and Ike Rodgers accompanied her. Trombones are made in the keys of B-flat and C. A trombone can easily produce flat notes, so keys with sharp notes are more difficult to play in.

**Prison Blues**, or **County Farm Blues** as it was originally titled, finds Alice in gaol for six months and on the county farm for seven. Her 'man' is no good, for he does not pay her bond. **My Man Blues** has a beautifully repeated short riff as intro and ending.

**Broadway St. Woman Blues** is about "a prostitute who patrolled the long main thoroughfare of St. Louis, Missouri. Broadway runs parallel to the Mississippi River a few blocks in from the waterfront and cuts across the coloured and downtown areas at Walnut Street, Market Street, Delmar Boulevard, etc". (1). Her name is written on her skirt, she is a good-time woman who does not have to work. Fortunately the judge now takes pity on her and allows her to go.

Three months later Alice, Henry and Ike travelled to Grafton, Wisconsin to make some more recordings. Six Alice Moore tracks have been found so far, but there may well be more. Other artists who recorded at the same time were George Allison & Willie White, Mary Johnson (cf Agram AB 2014), Robert Peeples and Wesley Wallace.

Alice was in Chicago from 18th August to 24th August 1934. Other artists who were with her in the Decca studio at that time were Roosevelt Sykes, Mary Johnson, Peetie Wheatstraw, Thomas 'Barrelhouse Buck' McFarland, Charley Jordan, Arthur McKay, Jimmy Oden, Tee McDonald, Joe McCoy, Memphis Minnie, Jimmie Gordon and Willie Lofton. Alice went drunk with Buck McFarland and was consequently robbed off her money in the hotel, so that she and Thomas had to make some more records to get back to St. Louis (9).

In **Have Mercy Blues** (B-flat) the trombonist plays driving triplets in the intro and the turnaround. Especially in the third verse Rodgers answers with a skipping rhythm. The tantalizing solo gives a lot of tension to the stomping piano. **Cold Iron Walls** (B-flat) is about a prison experience again. Alice is prepared to do anything for her honey. In **Loving Heart Blues** (E-flat) she will even steal or walk the streets for him. The piano intro shows light ragtime influences. **Serving Time Blues** (E-flat) is the third prison blues. Alice is so desperate that she cut her man. The creepy turnkey with his rolling eyes seems to enjoy her sentence. In **Lonesome Dream Blues** Alice has a dream about her man who is sleeping with another woman. This song is in F and the final song of the session, **Kid Man Blues** is in E-flat. There is no Henry Brown vocal on this track as **Blues & Gospel Records** states.

For the next five years Alice did not make any records at all. The reason for her absence from the recording studio is no doubt to be found in the Depression. Henry Brown told Paul Oliver that he and Ike Rodgers worked together on W.P.A. projects in the worst years of the Depression. They laboured in a road construction gang and cut stone in a rock quarry (7).

Alice Moore's voice sounds more relaxed in 1929 than in the period from 1934 to 1937. After the Depression her voice is louder, as she puts more force on the larynx and produces more nasal sounds in the higher range. Her sliding introductions are strong responses to the trombone sound, just as the final notes slide downwards with a glissando. A typical guttural blues vibrato is used for the tone embellishments. Alice strictly uses her middle register, on speech level, never the high or falsetto register (illustration I).

On 18th August 1934 Alice started a series of nine recording sessions for Decca in Chicago. Ike and Henry were at her side again. She started with a remake of **Black Evil Blues** (E-flat). Collector Bill Frase used to own a copy of this record with take -A.

In 1947 a Houston pianist called Leroy Ervin recorded Alice Moore's **Blue, Black and Evil** for Swing 145 and Gold Star 628. The track has been reissued on Arhoolie LP 206. Ervin hums an imitation of Rodgers' trombone. The arrangement, the tempo and the lyrics are similar to the Decca 7028 version by Alice Moore. In 1970 Leroy was still in the Houston telephone book, but Mike Leadbitter's attempt to contact him failed. It would be interesting to learn where Ervin picked the song up. He had probably heard Decca 7028.

On **Riverside Blues** there is no trombone. The violin which is featured instead, is probably played by Artie Mosby, a St. Louis violinist of the twenties and thirties. Trumpet blower Zilner T. Randolph and drummer Lige (= Elijah) Shaw remembered Artie Mosby as a member of the Criterion Theatre Band of St. Louis in 1928. Other band members were Louis Crenshaw (pno) and Shirley Clay (tpt). In the Chicago **Defender** of 27th September 1927 mention is made of the Royal Gypsy Orchestra of which Artie Mosby was a member by then. The orchestra performed in the New Washington Theatre on 23rd & Market Street in St. Louis. On the piano stool was good old Roosevelt Sykes.

On 22nd September 1932 Artie Mosby had accompanied Mary Johnson, Eithel Smith, Jimmie Oden and Roosevelt Sykes. However, **Blues & Gospel Records** still gives Kansas City drummer Curtis Mosby (1895-c.1960) here! (8). Mosby's sound differs totally from the country blues violinists.

We think he was classically trained as he plays with ease in several difficult keys and uses an almost classical vibrato on the long notes in the break. In **Riverside Blues** (B-flat) Mosby fills in the breaks in a soft, jazzy way. Sitting by the riverside Alice thinks about the man who left her. There may be no way out but death by drowning. On all four 1934 recording the singer is called 'Little Alice from St. Louis'. The two tracks of 24th August are the fastest in her repertoire. All the other tracks are andante, but these two are 108 MM. The trombone plays a modest role here, with a surprise solo in the break. **Lonesome Woman Blues** (B-flat) has a remarkable end by two light hearted extra bars. **Trouble Blues** (B-flat) is the shortest Alice Moore track (only two minutes and 35 seconds). All the men like little Alice because she can boot that thing.

(continued in enclosed booklet)



### SIDE 1

L-164-1	Have Mercy Blues -1	Pm 12973
L-165-3	Cold Iron Walls -1	Pm 12973
L-166-2	Loving Heart Blues -1	Pm 12947
L-167-2	Serving Time Blues -1	Pm 12947
C-9318--	Riverside Blues -2	De 7028
C-9333-A	Lonesome Woman Blues -3	De 7056
C-9334-A	Trouble Blues -3	De 7056
90177-A	S.O.S. Blues (Distress Blues) -4	De 7153
90179-A	Just Sitting Here Wondering -4	De 7109

### SIDE 2

90180-A	Death Valley Blues -4	De 7109
90184-A	Tomorrow Blues -5	De 7132
90746-A	Dark Angel -6	De 7227
90747-A	Money Tree Man -6	De 7227
91144-A	Midnight Creepers -7	De 7327
91145-A	Just A Good Girl Treated Wrong -7	De 7293
91146-A	New Black And Evil Blues -7	De 7293
91311-A	Push Cart Pusher -8	De 7393
91312-A	Unlucky Play Blues -8	De 7393

1. Alice Moore vcl, Ike Rodgers tb, Henry Brown pno. Grafton, Wisconsin, c. November 1929.
2. Alice Moore vcl, prob. Artie Mosby vln, Henry Brown pno. Chicago, 18th August 1934.
3. Alice Moore vcl, Ike Rodgers tb, Henry Brown pno. Chicago, 24th August 1934.
4. Alice Moore vcl, Peetie Wheatstraw pno. Chicago, 17th July 1935.
5. Alice Moore vcl, Peetie Wheatstraw gtr, Jimmie Gordon pno. Chicago, 19th July 1935.
6. Alice Moore vcl, Kokomo Arnold gtr, Peetie Wheatstraw pno. Chicago, 22nd May 1936.
7. Alice Moore vcl, Charley Jordan gtr, unknown sb, Peetie Wheatstraw pno. Chicago, 25th March 1937.
8. Alice Moore vcl, Charley Jordan gtr, unknown sb, Roosevelt Sykes pno. Chicago, 1st November 1937.

AB 2001 BARBECUE BOB .....	BROWN SKIN GAL
AB 2002 CHARLEY JORDAN .....	IT AIN'T CLEAN
AB 2003 WALTER VINSON .....	RATS BEEN ON MY CHEESE
AB 2004 JIM JACKSON .....	KANSAS CITY BLUES
AB 2005 LUCILLE BOGAN .....	WOMAN WON'T NEED NO MEN
AB 2006 WASHINGTON PHILLIPS .....	DENOMINATION BLUES
AB 2007 JAMES 'STUMP' JOHNSON .....	THE DUCK'S YAS-YAS-YAS
AB 2008 FRANCIS 'SCRAPPER' BLACKWELL .....	BLUES THAT MAKE ME CRY
AB 2009 ALGER 'TEXAS' ALEXANDER .....	TEXAS TROUBLESOME BLUES
AB 2010 SYLVESTER WEAVER .....	SMOKETOWN STRUT
AB 2011 UNREISSUED AGRAM TRACKS .....	TROUBLE DONE BORE ME DOWN
AB 2012 JOE PULLUM .....	BLACK GAL
AB 2014 MARY JOHNSON .....	I JUST CAN'T TAKE IT

PRODUCTION	: GUIDO VAN RIJN
SLEEVE NOTES	: GUIDO VAN RIJN, HANS VERGEER AND COR VAN SLIEDREGT
PHOTOGRAPHS	: FERB GREENSLADE AND PIERRE CHAIGNE
STUDIO	: FARMSOUND STUDIO
THANKS TO	: ROLF VON ARX, LEO BRUIN, J.T. NEWMAN AND KARL GERT ZUR HEIDE
ORIGINAL 78S	: PIERRE CHAIGNE, ROGER MISIEWICZ, GUIDO VAN RIJN AND MAX VREEDE
ART WORK	: MIRJAM UNGER

**AGRAM**

AGRAM BLUES  
AB 2013

Agram Blues Records  
A Division Of Blues Records Centre  
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## ILLUSTRATION I

VOCAL RANGE OF ALICE MOORE

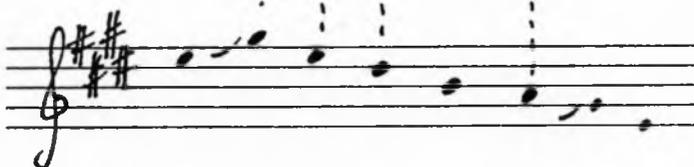


## ILLUSTRATION II

TYPE I KEY OF A (Bb/C)



TYPE II KEY OF E (F/G)



In 1960 Henry Brown remembered these days very well: "Henry Townsend played guitar and Little Alice sang. We'd play joints on Franklin... Delmar... Easton... spots in East St. Louis - like the Blue Flame Club. Come on up I got a job workin' at the Edwin Brothers Shoe Company on Washington Avenue. I had a piano in the back of the warehouse there; when I knock off I could kick 'em down again" (2).

Henry Townsend (b. 1909) remembered Alice too: "She was a real nice girl. She was real devoted to her blues singing. From my point of it she was pretty well a nice mixer with the public and a fairly intelligent girl. They used to call her Little Alice - well she was quite small I think at the time they adopted the name to her as Little Alice, but later I think she defeated that name, by getting quite some size - she got extra size before she died about ten or twelve years ago. Henry Brown has played for Alice Moore, for a fact I think he started her out, and she was a devoted blues singer. Well I feel that blues has its own to do with you" (2).

In the sleeve notes to the Magpie Piano Blues series Bob Hall and Richard Noblett called Henry Brown "the archetypal pianist of the St. Louis style. His relaxed barrelhouse style is bouncy with a sensitive touch. He uses a 4/4 chorded bass in favour of a single note pattern interspersed with eight to the bar walking octaves, while retaining his simple melodic right hand phraseology".

After 1934 Brown and Rodgers no longer accompanied Alice on record. The combination of piano/trombone was first used by Bessie Smith on 23rd July 1924 with Fletcher Henderson and Charlie Green. Green accompanied several female 'classic' blues singers on 21 tracks. Isador George accompanied six unissued tracks on trombone. Other trombonists who occasionally accompanied blues singers were Bert Johnson (from Texas?), Roy Palmer (from New Orleans), Jake Frazier and Joe Williams (both from Charleston, S.C.). There is only one conclusion possible: with no fewer than 26 blues accompaniments like Rodgers is the blues trombone king of the pre-war period. His sense of pitch is only rivalled by the great vocalists and by some New Orleans horns.

The cooperation with Henry Brown had been very intense indeed. Brown always showed a great respect for the singer in his accompaniments. Alice Moore was thus given ample room to deliver her message.

On 17th July 1935 Brown's place at the piano was taken by William Bunch, better known as Peetie Wheatstraw (1902-1941). Peetie was as proficient on the piano as he was on guitar. The melodic line of his piano style is continuous, almost regardless of the singer, with free, rhythmical right hand movements which are occasionally retarded in tempo. The whole fifth session is in the same relaxed tempo of 88MM. In this session the arrangement with the instrumental break after the third verse, which had been so popular with Alice in the first part of her career, was still used.

**S.O.S. Blues (Distress Blues)** and **Daddy Calling Mama** are both in F and have the same melodic pattern. The melody starts with the tonic note raised to the lowered third (a typical blues note) and descends to the tonic an octave lower. Only in the ninth and tenth bars the V-chord is used (illustration II).

**Just Sitting Here Wondering** and **Death Valley Blues** are both in C and share a melody as well. They start with the fifth note of the scale and concentrate on the lowered seventh note. In the ninth and tenth bars the melody moves from the fourth to the fifth note. **Death Valley** takes its imagery from John Bunyan's **The Pilgrim's Progress**. In this allegory the Valley Of The Shadow Of Death swarms with creatures of the Pit. Alice will holler 'death, where is thy sting' (1 Corinthians 15, 55) in death valley. In these and other Moore lyrics there are suicidal overtones.

Two days later Peetie switched to his guitar. In all his guitar accompaniments he uses the relative key of E. In this sixth session he capoed in sixth position to get the absolute key of B-flat and in third position to get the absolute key of G. Peetie uses more triplets here (upstrokes with the right hand fore finger and bass runs with the thumb) than on his own 1932 guitar recordings.

Peetie's place on the piano stool was now taken by his pupil Jimmie Gordon (born c. 1906 in St. Louis). Gordon claimed to be Peetie's Brother, but his piano technique was rather limited, so that he often used other pianists to accompany him. Gordon indeed sounds a bit uncertain here and certainly less powerful. His presence here is a fact as Alice shouts his name in both recordings. **Blue Black And Evil Blues** (B-flat) is the third version of her signature tune. The pearl diver imagery is a wonderful enrichment. The song has an exceptional arrangement here with its five verses and its spoken break.

In **Tomorrow Blues** (G) Alice wonders whether she will ever be happy. Her sweet thing has caused her to roam and she does not know what tomorrow will bring her.

One year later Peetie was back at the piano. On 22nd May 1936 James 'Kokomo' Arnold (1901-1969) played the guitar. Arnold is a creative artist with his variations on a specific one note melodic motive and his retarded tempo-changes. While Wheatstraw continues his continuous melodic lines, Arnold keeps the volume of his guitar somewhat down during the singing, and comes back full force to fill the gaps. His guitar is tuned in open A or G, but he is wonderfully adapt in any key. The songs of this and other 1936 sessions are often credited to M. Harris(t)on. This was probably a record company executive who robbed Alice of her royalties. There might be a connection with the James Hairston composer credits on the 1936 Frank James session. James plays in the St. Louis style too. **Grass Cutter Blues** (B-flat) and **Telephone Blues** (E) share an arrangement of five straight verses. In the first song Alice asks her daddy to cut her grass, but although she nearly broke her back to satisfy him he is picking some wild old grass somewhere else in the second song. The remaining four songs of this sessions have a break after the second verse. The spoken comments in **Dark Angel** show how familiar she was with Peetie. She gives him with his whiskey drinking: "can't stay drunk all the time!". The song is in B-flat. **Money Tree Man** (F) finally presents a man who does not hold back a lousy dime. In **I'm Going Fishing Too** (F-sharp) Alice notices that her papa never brings home any fish. She decides to go fishing too. **Three Men** (E) contains some funny lyrics about all the men who have a special influence on her.

The last Alice Moore recordings were made during four sessions in 1937. There is an unknown stringbassist on these recordings who gives accents on the first and the third counts and plucks and slaps mainly in a four in the bar rhythm. All these recordings are credited to 'Jordan' so we may safely assume that Charley Jordan (Agram AB 2002) was at least present. The accompanists are not very audible. The guitar is probably played with a flatpick. The melody of the piano is followed with single string runs on the highest strings, frequent choking of the blue notes and an occasional lower bass string run. Sometimes there is a chordal intermezzo on the highest strings. The guitarist must have known Peetie's playing very well as the two form a real team. We think Charley Jordan is the guitarist on the 1937 Alice Moore dates. **Hand in Hand Women** is in B-flat. **Doggin' Man Blues** (C) tells us that Alice has been mistreated ever since "nineteen and nine". Does she refer to her date of birth here, or is nine just a number that is supposed to rhyme with time? **Midnight Creepers** (G) are dangerous men who try to make a low down sneak at night. Alice has to buy a bulldog to protect herself. In **Just A Good Girl Treated Wrong** (F) Alice has made up her mind to leave her daddy. The new girls can have their way. In the fourth version of her theme song, now titled **New Blue Black And Evil Blues** (C) Alice catches her man with a girl at night. In **Tired Of Me Blues** (C) both Alice and Peetie are getting drunk of whiskey. She does not mind his whiskey drinking so much, if he would only find out how much Alice is in love with him.

**Humming Bird Man** remains unissued. **Too Many Men** (F-sharp) is an interesting version of a group of songs in which the phrase "I'll beat it back to Memphis Tennessee" is sung (cf. Red Mike Bailey in 1931). Mike Stewart and Don Kent make the following remarks about Alice's vocals: "Her singing style, with its particular stresses, and choppy, exclaimed phrasing, was not especially unusual. No one, however, converted it to quite such a mannerism. Teddy Darby's post-'33 sides employ this heavy accented style, and Charlie McFadden's delivery is similar; other blues singers appeared to copy it" (3).

On 26th March 1937 Alice recorded an unissued track entitled **He's Mine, All Mine** and **Don't Deny Me Baby** (C) in which Peetie's name is mentioned again. Own me as your child, or I swear to God I will run wild! The guitar can be heard most clearly on this track.

On the tenth session of 1st November the piano is certainly not by Peetie Wheatstraw. In the solos the right hand switches from higher to lower octaves, uses tremolos and sliding notes. There is a simple octave bass in the left hand and now and then the melody is retarded. This session is clasped in between two Roosevelt Sykes sessions which are incorrectly dated in **Blues & Gospel Records**. We have no doubt about the presence of Roosevelt Sykes here.

The bass player is far more interesting than his colleague of the eighth and ninth sessions. He has more rhythmic variations and a far greater pushing power by the use of dotted eighth notes. The guitarist plays hardly audible chords and boogie runs on the lower strings in the first position.

**Push Cart Pusher** (G) may very well be about Peetie Wheatstraw. In the daytime he pushes rags and bottles, at night he pushes little Alice. In Ralph Ellison's awe-inspiring first novel **Invisible Man** (1952) Peetie pushes a hundred pounds of blueprints. "I'm a piano player and a rounder, a whisky drinker and a pavement pounder. I'll teach you some good bad habits" (4).

**Unlucky Play Blues** (F) starts with a fine piano intro. The piano rolls from the highest regions of the keyboard down to the normal accompaniment in the key of F in the middle of the song. The song sums it all up: Alice lost her jack in the game, her man was taken away. There are six further unissued titles in the discography: **Hod Carrier Blues**, **Poosy Cat Blues**, **Men Are Like Street Cars**, **Gone Hog Wild**, **I Give You Money** and the aptly titled **My Blues Is Like Whiskey**. In 1960 Henry Townsend stated that Alice Moore died ten or twelve years ago. This would mean that she died c. 1950. Early in 1954 reports came in that she would still be in St. Louis (5), but no trace of her was found. In 1969 Mike Stewart confirmed that Alice Moore was dead (6).

Guido van Rijn  
Cor van Slidregt  
Hans Vergeer  
31st May 1987

## NOTES:

1. Eric Townley: **Tell Your Story**, p.50, Storyville Publications, 1976.
2. Paul Oliver: **Conversation With The Blues**, pp 104/5, Cassell & Company Ltd, 1967.
3. Mike Stewart and Don Kent: sleeve notes to **Hard Time Blues**, Mamlsh LP S 3806.
4. Ralph Ellison: **Invisible Man**, p. 144, Penguin Books, 1984 (first published in the U.S.A. 1952).
5. Paul E. Affeldt: Report On The Re-Discovery Project, **The Jazz Report**, Volume III, No. 2, February 1955.
6. Mike Stewart: Backwards Sam In St. Louis, **Blues Unlimited** 72, p. 13, May 1970.
7. Paul Oliver: Henry Brown Blues, sleeve notes to 77La 12-5, an album of 1960 Henry Brown recordings.
8. Karl Gert zur Heide: letter to the editor of **Mississippi Rag**, Volume 2, No 10, p.3, August 1975.
9. Sam Charters: Interview with Thomas 'Barrelhouse Buck' McFarland on 12th May 1961 (Folkways LP 3554).



PEETIE WHEATSTRAW

## ALICE MOORE 1929-1937

15447 BLACK AND EVIL BLUES (aab)(Riverside 12-135)  
(Record Changer 1)(Collectors Classics 37)

I'm black and I'm evil, and I did not make myself,  
If my man don't have me, he won't have nobody else.

I'm going to buy me a bulldog, to watch me while I'm 'sleep,  
Because I'm so black and evil, scared I might make a midnight creep.

I believe to my soul, the Lord has got a curse on me,  
Because every man I get, a no good woman steals him from me.

Did you ever lay down at night, behind you lies an empty space?  
And you would turn over and hug the pillow, where your baby used to lay.

15448 PRISON BLUES (aab)(Collectors Classics 37)  
Oh, the judge he sentenced me, and the clerk he wrote it down,  
My man said: 'I'm sorry for you babe, but you are county farm bound'.

Oh, six months in jail, seven months on the county farm,  
If my man had 've been any good, he would have went my bond.

I worked hard on the county farm, tryin' to forget my man,  
But someday he's goin' to be sorry, he treated me this-a-way.

I'm going to build me a scaffold, just to hang myself,  
Because the man I'm lovin', like to worry poor me to death.

15449 MY MAN BLUES (aab)(Collectors Classics 37)  
My man, my man, treats me so lowdown,  
Everything I do, seems like to me is wrong.

I love my man, but he loves somebody else,  
And I think I'm a damn fool, to keep on worryin' myself.

Did you ever lay down, think about your man at night,  
And you would get to twistin' and turnin', and you couldn't lay just right?

My babe came to me, with the tears rolling down his face,  
Says: 'I'm sorry for you, Alice, but another woman has taken your place'.

11452 BROADWAY ST. WOMAN BLUES (aab)(Rounder 4007)  
(Record Changer 1) (Collectors Classics 37)

I was standing on the corner, just between Broadway and Main,  
And a cop walked up, and he asked poor me my name.

I told the cop, my name was written on my skirt,  
I'm a good-time woman and I sure don't have to work.

He says: 'I'll take you to the judge, and see what he will do,  
Oh, he may give you five years and he may take pity on you'.

Oh, he took me to the judge, with my head hanging low,  
And the judge said: 'Hold your head up, for you are bound to go'.

L-164-1 HAVE MERCY BLUES (aab)(Agram 2013)  
How can I be happy, when all I love is gone?  
He has gone and left me, to face this mean old world alone.

Babe, did you ever think that, be pleadin' for mercy some day?  
That's why I come pleadin' to you, treatin' me the same old way.

Babe, you treat me cruel, than anyone I've ever seen,  
Ah, you treat me so cruel, think mercy must have been some dream.

Now, daddy, if your heart is running, you will hear my plea,  
And have mercy, and come back home to me.

L-165-3 COLD IRON WALLS (aab)(Agram 2013)  
My friend, my friend, you led this world of crime alone,  
For crime, my friend, honey, will keep you from your happy home.

Oh, my baby, the law outnumbers you, a thousand to one,  
And when he gets you, pay for the crime that you have done.

When I was in my crime, things was nice as they could be,  
But now I am in trouble, they have gone back on me.

sp: Oh, Ike, blow these blues for me. Nobody knows the way I feel.  
Everybody take my advice. Blow 'em Ike.

My happiness is wrecked now, crime was the cause of it all,  
And all I can do now, is look at these cold iron walls.

sp: Lord, Lord, Lord.

L-166-2 LOVING HEART BLUES (aab)(Agram 2013)

Oh, Lord, if you ever, please, make my baby understand,  
Understand that I love him, do anything for him I can?

I will pawn my clothes for him, walk the streets the whole night long,  
And I will steal for him, although I know it's wrong.

This world can be cruel, babe, cruel as cruel can be,  
I would not turn, honey, come back home to me.

sp: Lord, blow it, Ike, for my baby.  
Girls, please don't have no one man, cause he'll break your heart in two.

Lord, I told you my love: 'What are you going to do?  
Are you going to say words, break my true loving heart in two?'

L-167-2 SERVING TIME BLUES (aab)(Agram 2013)

I laid in jail, oh baby, the whole night long,  
I cut my man, because he would not come back home.

I told the sergeant, that he could take me to jail,  
Because ain't a doggone good man, to come and go my bail.

The turnkey slammed the door, said: 'Poor girl', then rolled his eyes,  
'And now, little girl, you got to serve your time'.

Six bits ain't no dough, six months ain't no great long time,  
I'm going to the workhouse, baby, just to serve my time.

L-170-2 LONESOME DREAM BLUES (aab)(Collectors Classics 37)  
(SPR 1)

I had a dream last night, babe, I cannot understand,  
I dreamed I saw some woman, sleeping with my man.

I tried to be good, but he would not let me be,  
Now he is leaving, just to spite poor me.

Now, you got all my money, still you ain't satisfied,  
And now you got another woman, going to catch the train and ride.

You may go, babe, you may have your way,  
But when you think of your loving, I know that you cannot stay.

L-171-2 KID MAN BLUES (aab) (Collectors Classics 37) (SPR 1)

Baby, when I was all down and out, you just could not be found,  
Now I have someone to care for me, don't want you hanging around.

I have got a regular man here, also a good kid man down town,  
I can't quit my regular, and I won't throw my kid man down.

Lord, I quit my kid man, because I caught him in a lie,  
And all I can hear now, is his lone and mournful cry.

sp: Hey, hey, play it Mr. kid man. Oh, you dirty mistreater!

Just a poor little girl, looking in the deep blue sea,  
I have quit you, kid man, so don't sing your blues to me.



IKE RODGERS



CHARLEY JORDAN

C-9317-? BLACK EVIL BLUES (aab) (Rounder 4007) (Origin 20)

And I'm black and I'm evil, and I did not make myself,  
If my man don't have me, he won't have nobody else.

Gonna buy me a bulldog, to watch me while I sleep,  
Because I'm so black and evil, scared I might make a midnight creep.

I believe to my soul, the Lord has got a curse on me,  
Because every man that I get, a no-good woman steals them from me.

sp: Oh, blow 'em Mr. Rodgers, oh, baby, that's so good.  
Blow 'em now, blow 'em for me. Well, alright.

Did you ever lay down at night, behind you lies an empty space?  
You will turn over and hug the pillow, where your daddy used to lay.

C-9318-- RIVERSIDE BLUES (aab) (Agram 2013)

It is water, water, water, water rolls every day,  
I can't catch this water, but I sure can't catch my man.

I see the moon in this river, and the moon shinin' up above,  
But I don't like the moonlight, without the one I love.

And I wish I could swim, little Alice could only float,  
I would jump in the river, and drift out to this boat.

sp: Pick 'em Henry Brown, pick 'em, pick 'em! I got the blues.  
Got the blues so bad, Well, alright!

Yes, I'm sitting by a river, taking off both of my shoes,  
Gonna jump in this river, and gettin' of these "Riverside Blues".

C-9333-A LONESOME WOMAN BLUES (aab) (Agram 2013)

Yes, I'm lonesome and I'm worried, heartsick and feeling blue,  
If your man told you he was through, then you would be too.

If I was mean and evil, or tricky I wouldn't care,  
But I cannot harm, a friend of his a hair.

If your rider gets your pyjamas, don't forget my nightgown,  
Swear to God, little Alice ain't sleepy, but she feel like putting her loving down.

sp: Well, all right, blow 'em, Ike. Good to me must be good to you.

Yes, he may go, he may also have his way,  
But I'm afraid some day, another woman will make him pay.

C-9334-A TROUBLE BLUES (aab)(Agram 2013)

It is blues and trouble, honey, they run hand in hand,  
When you get in trouble, swear your worries just began.

And it's troubles and worries, I have had 'em all my day,  
And it seems just like trouble, is going to take me to my grave.

I have roamed and I have rambled, I have travelled everywhere,  
And I can't go no place, sure is trouble there.

sp: Well, alright. Blow 'em, Mr. Rodgers.  
Blow 'em for little Alice.  
Now let me tell you about me:

And it's Alice, Alice, Alice, Alice Moore is my real, right name,  
All the men like little Alice, just because she can boot that thing.

90177-A S.O.S. BLUES (DISTRESS BLUES) (aab) (Agram 2013)

S.O.S. means that there's help needed, needed on the sea,  
And I'm the one that's callin', so please send some help to me.

And my man don't want my love, and he refused my money too,  
And I got money to pay you, if you tell me what to do.

And I can't use hoodoo, don't know no tricks at all,  
And I will do anything now, to get that mule back in my stall.

sp: Oh, if only I was a gypsy, oh, baby, I could read his mind.  
Play 'em, Peetie. Play 'em for me now.

Yes, to lose my love, it putted me in distress,  
And I'm not ashamed to tell you, I'm sending out an S.O.S.

90178-A DADDY CALLING MAMA (aab)

And I called me a daddy, just about half past nine,  
And he said: 'No, no, lady, I ain't got a lousy dime'.

And I called me another daddy, and he began to fall,  
He said: 'Watch me make this old gal drunk, and have me a real good ball'.

And I called me another daddy, to try to complete my game,  
But he looked at me and said: 'Baby, I thought you was another dame'.

If you's a daddy calling woman, please take my advice,  
And stop calling these daddies, if you don't they will wreck your life.

I used to stand on the corner, call any daddy that come along,  
... \* \* \*

90179-A JUST SITTING HERE WONDERING (aab) (Agram 2013)

And I'm just sitting here wondering, did my man ever care for me?  
Cause he treated me so lowdown and dirty, until it's killin' poor me.

And he leaves me early in the morning, don't come home till late at night,  
Lord, you know, baby, that's why, I'd rather for him to be out of my sight.

And I love that man, tell the whole round world I do,  
And it's comin' a day, I'm gonna make him learn to love me too.

*sp:* Oh, girls, leave these no good men alone.  
Just why do I have to love that man,  
when I know myself he don't mean me no good?  
That's alright though.

He takes all of my money, beats me and dogs me all day long,  
But some day he'll be sorry, that he'll ever have done little Alice wrong.

90180-A DEATH VALLEY BLUES (aab) (Agram 2013)

Let me go down in death valley, and hear the death bells ring,  
And holler: 'Death, oh death, oh death, where is thy sting?'

And it's please don't take, the pillow out from under my head  
For I live hard, I die hard, tell you I will rather be dead.'

Some day in death valley, you are well sure to see,  
Then I will remind you of the things, honey, that you have done to me.

And if trouble didn't kill me, Lord, did it with all ease,  
Let me go down in death valley, and by my own self, please.

90183-A BLUE BLACK AND EVIL BLUES (aabb) (Mamlsh 3806)

And I'm blue, black and I'm evil, and I did not make myself,  
But if my man don't have me, he's having everybody else.

Girls, I'm black, I was born black from my doggone birth,  
But my man he tells me, I'm the sweetest little old black thing on earth.

And I've been good, good as I intend to be,  
And I'm getting sick and tired, my man makin' a durn fool out of me.

Yes, he may go, he also have his way,  
But when he thinks of his loving, Alice knows that he cannot stay.

*sp:* Oh, I love that man. I'm only scared to call his name.  
Don't think hard, Alice, cause you're black and evil girl.  
Have I got the blues! Play 'em now, play 'em, Jimmie!

Yes, my man is a pearl diver, and his stroking can't go wrong,  
And he puts it on the bottom, and all the breath's so doggone long.

90184-A TOMORROW BLUES (aab) (Agram 2013)

And I once had a happy home, but now I'm all alone,  
Fot that sweet thing of mine, has caused poor me to roam.

And I once was unhappy, but I won't be unhappy anymore,  
Because I got a sweet man, don't follow me everywhere I go.

And it's, Lord, I wonder, what will tomorrow bring?  
And if it brings me trouble, swear to God ... a doggone thing.

*sp:* Play 'em, Peetie. I mean you Wheatstraw. Play 'em for Alice now.  
Jimmie Gordon, you pick that piano for me now, honey.  
Alice loves the blues.

And I wonder and I wonder, will I be happy one of these lonesome days?  
And I'm leaving here, people, and I don't mean to go away to stay

907444-A GRASS CUTTER BLUES (aab) (MCA 630106)

And I woke up this morning, and the rain was falling fast,  
And I began to wish that, I had some good man to cut my grass.

And it's, daddy, daddy, what am I going to do?  
Can't you see for yourself, Alice don't want no other grasscutter but you?

And it's listen here, people, there's gonna be trouble for somebody there,  
Because I done got tired, sleeping in this old bed all by myself.

And I'm leaving here this morning and I won't be back nomore,  
Because that stunt you pulled off yesterday, it ain't gonna work nomore.

I'm gonna ride this train, till the wheels drive easy, Lord,  
Because I'm sick and tired, bein' treated like a doggone dog.

90745-A TELEPHONE BLUES (aab)

And it's 'Hello, Central, please, give me 409,  
And I just wanna talk, to that lyin' man of mine'.

And he made me love him, now he's trying to throw me down,  
So I got a shotgun, hit him just like he was a hound.

I tried to satisfy my man, and I nearly broke my back,  
Now he's gone around here, pickin' this wild old grass.

He telephoned me last night, said: 'Alice, I am true',  
But if I catch up with him, be too tight, people, I'm telling you.

The telephone was ringing, I was too evil to move,  
So now I'm telling you, people, I got the 'Telephone Blues'.

90746-A DARK ANGEL (Agram 2013)

And I'm a little dark angel, and I'm drifting through this land,  
And the reason I'm drifting, trying to find me a real good man.

They calls me 'little dark angel', I am my mama's baby child,  
So I wants me a good man, to keep me from running wild.

*sp:* Well, well, well. People, look who is here!  
Here come Peetie drunk again. Oh, when is he gonna stop drinking whiskey?  
Can't stay drunk all the time, all the time.  
Oh, but someday you'll quit.

Now, I ain't good-looking, and I ain't very fair,  
But this is one little dark angel, that sure nows how to pass.

I'm a little dark angel, and I sure do have my way,  
So I wants me a real good man, to do just what I say.



HENRY BROWN

90747-A MONEY TREE MAN (aab) (Agram 2013)

I have a good man, and they calls him 'money tree',  
And I think he is, because he's so good to me.

Now I love that man, my love is a true as love can be,  
Because my money tree man, brings his money on to me.

*sp:* Girls, you try and get yourselves a man like that.

It is hard these days, girls, to get a man like this man of mine,  
And he gives me all of his money, don't hold back a lousy dime.

He gives me everything I want, I don't have to worry at all,  
And the only thing he don't want, another mule kicking in his stall.

990752-A I'M GOING FISHING TOO (aab)

What makes you tell your wife you're going fishing, when you stays out so late?  
So now I have one thing, that I'm really goin' to state.

I know that any fish will bite, daddy, if you have the right kind of bait,  
So now when you come without any fish, I don't believe you've been to the  
fishing lake.

So from now on, daddy, tell you just what I'm going to do:  
Whenever you go fishing, papa, little Alice is going fishing too.

You went out on two fishing trips, daddy, and no fishes did I see,  
So I believe to my soul, you gotta make a fish out of me.

I believe I'll go fishing, at catfish, snipe or trout,  
There's some good fishes in my lake, all they need is pulling out.

90754-A THREE MEN (aab) (Down With The Game 204)

There ain't but three men, who really can spend my dough,  
That's the rent man, the grocery man and the man that owns the clothing store.

There's only three men, that can flag this train of mine,  
That's the working man and the gambler, and the one that loves me all the  
time.

There ain't but three men, that I really won't treat wrong,  
That's my father and my brother, and the one that lays on my arm.

There ain't but three men, who can make a clown out of me,  
That's my husband and my sweetheart, and my old-time used-to-be.

There ain't but three men, who really can make me fall,  
That's my girl-friend, my kid man, the one that's kicking in my stall.

90754-A HAND IN HAND WOMEN (aab)

I'm gonna get me a partner, just to run hand in hand,  
But I ain't gonna get no woman, gonna get me a partner-man.

I just came here to tell you, girls, I don't run hand in hand,  
Please take my advice, get yourselves another man.

Because that's my man, and he is just my type,  
And the clothes he wears on his back, they cost me ten dollars a yard.

I'm tired of telling you, girls, I don't run hand in hand,  
The last gal I run hand in hand with, is the girl that stole my man.

These hand in hand women, these ain't no friends to you,  
They will take your good man, leave you with these 'Hand In Hand Blues'.

91143-A DOGGIN' MAN BLUES (aab)

My man, he mistreated me, he treated me like a dog,  
But that lovin' he's got, made me fall just like a log.

I tried everything I could, to please that man of mine,  
But how can I please him, when he treats me so unkind.

I don't want no man, that won't help me when I'm down,  
Swear to God I don't want no man, that will even keep me dogged around.

I have been mistreated, ever since nineteen and nine,  
So I wants me a good man, that will love me all the time.

So, bye, bye, daddy, that's all I have to say,  
Cause I've got me a good man, that will work for me both night and day.

91144-A MIDNIGHT CREEPERS (aab) (Agram 2013)

These times is so dangerous, till a woman can't walk the street,  
There is some dangerous men, tryin' to make a low down sneak.

I'm gonna buy me a bulldog, to watch me while I sleep,  
That's to keep these dangerous men, from making a midnight creep.

Better watch your step, girls, when you goes out at night,  
Because these dangerous men, they sure is got to be too tight.

I was scared last night, and the night before,  
So I got me a good man, don't have to be scared nomore.

91145-A JUST A GOOD GIRL TREATED WRONG (aab) (Agram 2013)

And I'm a good little girl, but I just been treated wrong,  
So now I made up my mind, to let this man I got alone.

He has got too many women, nothing but jive I can see,  
So I wants me a good man, that really will look after me.

When he goes out with other women, he tries to call me down,  
But I'm too good of a girl, to even be dragged around.

So I'm leaving you, daddy, so you new gals can have your way,  
But you know the old song says: 'Every Dog Must Have His Day'.

91146-A NEW BLUE BLACK AND EVIL BLUES (aab) (Agram 2013)

And I am blue, black and evil, and I wished I had made myself,  
I would fix this man of mine, so he could have nobody there.

When I get so blue, black and evil, I get blood all in my eyes,  
When I catch my man with his woman, he starts to tellin' me lies.

Oh, play 'em. Yes, I'm so, yes, so black and evil.  
Lord, I pray it's no other girls have a man like this man of mine.  
Allright, allright then!

I'm so blue, black and evil, until I can hardly see,  
Caught my man with a girl last night, that was supposed to be a friend to me.

So listen here, girl, here's what I want you to know,  
This man keeps me so black and evil, so I'm gonna let him go.

91147-A TIRED OF ME BLUES (aab)

You are tired of me, daddy, but you just won't let me be,  
Your ways and your actions, show that you don't want poor me.

So I'm going away, babe, and I'm going away for good,  
And you never won't see me, back in your doggone neighbourhood.

sp: Ah, play 'em. Ah, Peetie, I believe I'm getting drunk.  
Honest, I'm getting drunk, Peetie.  
Ah, play the blues for little Alice.  
Alice is the onliest Moore in town. Yes, indeed. Sounds good to me.

Your whiskey drinking, babe, did not worry to me so,  
The thing that grieves me so hard, is that you don't want poor me nomore.

It's no use of me pleading, oh, no need of pleading to you,  
Someday you'll find out, little Alice don't love nobody but you.

91149-A TOO MANY MEN (aab)

These men, these men, they just won't let me be,  
So I'm gonna pack my suitcase, and beat it back to Tennessee.

If you got too many men, they will stay right on your trail,  
They will get you into trouble, and no-one will go your bail.

When you got too many men, you can't even sleep at night,  
Every time you step out on the street, some of them will want to start a fight.

When these men get mad, you don't know what to do,  
They will hypnotize you or beat you, and keep you in trouble too.

So take my advice, girls, don't have too many men,  
You will have to go to the hospital, that will be your doggone end.

91156-A DON'T DENY ME BABY (aab) (MCA 630106)

Don't deny me, baby, but own me as your child,  
But if you disown me now, I swear to God I will run wild.

I went across the ocean, then across the deep blue sea,  
I can't find nobody, that felt like my man to me.

sp: Oh, play 'em, Mr. Peetie.

And if I had my rifle, cartridges in my doggone hand,  
I would be on my way, to cross that no man's land.

I wrote my man a letter, and I mailed it in the air,  
Sayin': 'Man I regret, but I am in trouble here'.

91311-A PUSH CART PUSHER (aab) (Agram 2013)

My man is a push cart pusher, but he treats me nice and kind,  
When you see him with that old push cart, he's tryin' to make me a dime.

He pushes all day long, then he come in and push at night,  
I like my push cart pusher, cause he pushes them up just right.

My man is a push cart pusher, he gets everything he sees,  
Reason I know he's a push cart pusher, cause he pushes them up for me.

sp: Oh, girls, don't you wish you had a push cart pusher like mine?  
Oh, he's allright. He pushes them up for me.  
Get your rags and get your bottles. Sure is allright with Alice.

Now listen here, gals, don't play your hand too strong,  
I don't care who you have, but leave my push cart alone.

91312-A UNLUCKY PLAY BLUES (aab) (Agram 2013)

And I thought I played lucky, then I lost the jack in the game,  
But when I found out, another woman was playing my man.

She played it so strong, till she taken my man away,  
And I'm so worried, till I'm bound to go astray.

You are mistreating me, daddy, but go on and rub it in,  
But I will get even with you, clock begins to strike at ten.

And I thought I got lucky, and caught somebody's jack,  
But after all, I will get my daddy back.

So when you're playing a game, you must to look to win or lose,  
So that's why I'm singing, these 'Unlucky Play Blues'.



KOKOMO ARNOLD



ROOSEVELT SYKES