

FAME Review: Various Artists - Mean Street: Jukin' Wit De Blues

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**Mean Street:  
Jukin' Wit De Blues**

**Various Artists**

*Catbone Music - CB-2005-2*

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange  
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The stingingly raw opening to Howlin' Wolf's *Before I Commit a Crime* sets up the tone of this anthology. Then, of course, the Wolf's unique vocals come charging in, and we're off to the races. Everything about the cut is just drop-dead illustrative of what the blues really are, how gut deep they run. Follow that with Elmore James' immortal *Dust my Broom*, and you're then ready for the rock and rollin' Little Richard and his *Money Honey* right afterwards. This song has been done many times by the esteemed Mr. Penniman and even more by myriad others, but this is a version I'd never before laid ears to, and that's the case with many of the versions throughout the Jukin' Wit De Blues series, a set of CDs that will have Mama's nylons rolling up and down but set your own mad heart racing with joy.

I have no end of anthologies in my vast collection of recordings, some of which run to a number of volumes, but few are as riveting as this Jukin' Wit De Blues series. Should you care to see why Alligator, Yellow Dog, Vizz Tone, Stony Plain, and the many great modern non-mainstream labels are so damn good, you need to drop back in time and wrap your ears around these gems, 'cause this is the fertile loam all present-day bluesbusters issue from. You'll recognize all the names—save perhaps for the obscure Nanette Workman, maybe even Barry Darnell—but each cut was extremely well chosen as grittily representative of the muscular backbone of the artists. The tracks are dark, raucous, blustery, swingin', and authentic as hell.

Butterfield's take on *Don't Lie to Me* boasts a standout electrifying guitar intro before laying back into folk-blues tempo. James Cotton's comp of Sonny Boy Williamson's *Dealin' with the Devil* rips the roof tiles off with that staggeringly fiery harp of his, Cotton able to make one of the most haunting uses of the instrument since the damned thing was invented. When he's on a tear, the gent becomes a kettle boiling over. And what would any self-respecting blues series be without a little Jimmy Reed? He gets two excursions here and nails the listener to the floorboards with raw, juicy, nasty midnight preachings from the underside of moonshine speakeasies and riverside night parties. Gird your loins for *Mean Street*, brothers 'n sisters, 'cause no one gets off the road with virginity intact.

**Track List:**

- **HOWLIN' WOLF:** Before I Commit a Crime
- **ELMORE JAMES:** Dust my Broom
- **LITTLE RICHARD:** Money Honey
- **JIMMY REED:** Take out some Insurance
- **JAMES COTTON:** V8 Ford Blues
- **HOWLIN' WOLF:** Killin' Floor
- **BARRY DARNELL:** Deacon Stomp
- **JAMES COTTON:** I Need You so Bad
- **MIKE BLOOMFIELD:** Don't Lie to Me
- **MUDDY WATERS:** Standin' Around Crying
- **LITTLE RICHARD:** Hound Dog
- **JAMES COTTON:** Dealin' with the Devil
- **JIMMY REED:** I Goin' Upside your Head
- **PETER FRAMPTON / NANETTE WORKMAN:** Love Taker
- **ETTA JAMES:** It Brings a Tear
- **JAMES COTTON:** Southside Boogie
- **JOHN LEE HOOKER:** Rock with Me

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