

Albert King – I'll Play The Blues For You (1972)

Written by bluesever

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1. *I'll Play the Blues for You*
2. *Little Brother*
3. *Breaking Up Somebody's Home*
4. *High Cost of Loving*
5. *I'll Be Doggone*
6. *Answer to the Laundromat Blues*
7. *Don't Burn Down the Bridge*
8. *Angel of Mercy*

Albert King (vocals, guitar); The Memphis Horns (horns); The Bar-Kays & The Movement (bass, drums).

It's not as if Albert King hadn't tasted success in his first decade and a half as a performer, but his late-'60s/early-'70s recordings for Stax did win him a substantially larger audience. During those years, the label began earning significant clout amongst rock fans through events like Otis Redding's appearance at the Monterey International Pop Festival and a seemingly endless string of classic singles. When King signed to the label in 1966, he was immediately paired with the Stax session team Booker T. & the MG's. The results were impressive: "Crosscut Saw," "Laundromat Blues," and the singles collection *Born Under a Bad Sign* were all hits. Though 1972's *I'll Play the Blues for You* followed a slightly different formula, the combination of King, members of the legendary Bar-Kays, the Isaac Hayes Movement, and the sparkling Memphis Horns was hardly a risky endeavor. The result was a trim, funk-infused blues sound that provided ample space for King's oft-imitated guitar playing. King has always been more impressive as a soloist than a singer, and some of his vocal performances on *I'll Play the Blues for You* lack the intensity one might hope for. As usual, he more than compensates with a series of exquisite six-string workouts. The title track and "Breaking Up Somebody's Home" both stretch past seven minutes, while "I'll Be Doggone" and "Don't Burn Down the Bridge" (where King coaxes a crowd to "take it to the bridge," James Brown-style) break the five-minute barrier. Riding strutting lines by bassist James Alexander, King runs the gamut from tough, muscular playing to impassioned cries on his instrument, making *I'll Play the Blues for You* one of a

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