

## Sugar Blue - In Your Eyes (1995)

Written by bluesever

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1 Gucci Gucci Man 5:38 2 Bottom Line 4:19 3 In Your Eyes 6:43 4 She 2:57 5 Bluepine 6:12 6 Lip Service And Lies 6:08 7 Whirlwind 4:52 8 Listen Baby 4:37 9 Love's Sweet Secrets 3:12 10 Little Red Rooster 6:30 Bass – Charles Hosch (tracks: 1,4 & 10), Rob Amster (tracks: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 9) Drums – James Knowles (tracks: 1 & 4), Nick Kitzos (tracks: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 9) Guitar – Herb Walker (tracks: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 & 9), Motoaki Makino Harmonica, Vocals – Sugar Blue Keyboards – Ken Hale (tracks: 7 & 10), Motoaki Makino, Roosevelt Purifoy (tracks: 1, 2) Percussion – Alejo Poveda (tracks: 4, 10) Piano – Pinetop Perkins (tracks: 8) Saxophone, Flute – Dan Johnson (17) Trombone – Jim Massoth Trumpet – Carey Deadman, Ed St. Peter

Sugar Blue likes to tell people that blues isn't tragic, it's black magic, but he adds that b.l.u.e.s stands for black life under egregious suppression. A veteran blues harmonica player, singer and songwriter, Sugar Blue is a cat who has lived 13 of his nine lives.

Born James Whiting in 1949 to an absent father and a mother who was a chorus singer and dancer at Harlem's Apollo Theater. The future bluesman who did for the harmonica what Hendrix did for guitar lost five of his six brothers to street violence. Moving from tenement to tenement as a child he avoided the street by burying himself in the pages of Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* and Hemmingway's *Old Man in The Sea*. He jumped three grades when he transferred from Catholic to public school.

As a youngster he wanted to play saxophone like Lester Young. But his mother would have none of the squealing that marked his practices. Legend has it that she took him to see Little Stevie Wonder when both he and Stevie were 12 because she felt guilty about refusing to listen to his practicing while encouraging him to take up the quieter harp. "No," he says, "she took me to see Stevie Wonder because she wanted to see Stevie Wonder. Actually, I think if I was

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meant to play sax I would have gone after one, and I'd have bought one and managed to play it."

Instead, the harp, in his words, became part of him. His goal? To make his playing on what some call the poor man's sax as fluid as the instrument his mother wouldn't let him play. "I still listen to a lot of saxophone players and trumpeters and listened a lot to Charlie Christian and a lot of big band stuff long before I ever got into the blues." ---bluesblastmagazine.com

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