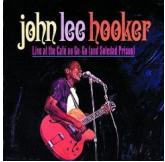


John Lee Hooker - Live at the Café au Go-Go (And Soledad Prison) [1996]

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 23 September 2010 17:01 - Last Updated Sunday, 21 April 2013 15:12

John Lee Hooker - Live at the Café au Go-Go (And Soledad Prison) [1996]



1. *I'm Bad Like Jesse James* 2. *She's Long, She's Tall (She Weeps Like A Willow Tree)* [play](#)
[y](#)
3. *When My First Wife Left Me* 4. *Heartaches And Misery* 5. *One Bourbon, One Scotch And One Beer* 6. *I Don't Want No Trouble* 7. *I'll Never Get Out Of These Blues Alive* 8. *Seven Days*
[play](#)
9. *What's The Matter Baby* 10. *Lucille* 11. *Boogie Everywhere I Go* 12. *Serve Me Right To Suffer* 13. *Bang Bang Bang Bang*

Personnel: John Lee Hooker (vocals, guitar); John Lee Hooker Jr. (vocals); Muddy Waters, Sammy Lawhorn, Luther Johnson, Luther Tucker, Charlie Grimes (guitar); Otis Spann (piano); Mac Arnold, Lex Silver (bass); Francis Clay, Ken Swank (drums). Recorded live on August 30, 1966 and on June 11, 1972.

Perhaps it's a tribute to the visceral nature of the blues that Hooker's live performances are usually more powerful than his studio recordings. Whatever the reason, this disc is no exception. This two-fer includes eight tracks from a 1966 performance at The Cafe Au Go-Go, then five from an appearance at Soledad Prison six years later, with Hooker in raw, dramatic form throughout. With Muddy Waters and his band lending heavy backbeats and textured guitar and piano work at the first gig, Hooker weaves narratives in tracks like "I'm Bad Like Jesse James," a chilly moral about retribution for disloyal friends, and, as he calls it, the "real blues" of "When My First Wife Left Me."

The Soledad Prison tracks, particularly "What's The Matter Baby" and Hooker's trademark "Bang Bang Bang Bang," are characterized by a high, gritty energy. With throbbing, slow tempos and Hooker's flat, growling delivery, there isn't the slightest tinge of artificiality on this disc. It's genuine blues through and through.

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