

Valerie Wellington - Million Dollar Secret (1984)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Down in the Dumps* (2:52) 2 *Million Dollar Secret* (4:03) 3 *Independent Blues* (2:47) 4 *Cold, Cold Feeling* (5:25) 5 *Smokestack Lightning* (3:38) 6 *Dirty No-Gooder's Blues* (3:56) 7 *My Baby Treats Me Like a Stepchild* (3:52) 8 *You Can't Have My Monkey* (2:50) 9 *Bad Avenue* (4:33) 10 *Love Don't Love Nobody* (2:27) 11 *Wild About You* (3:04) 12 *Voodoo Blues* (5:26) Personnel: Valerie Wellington (Piano), (Vocals) Nate Applewhite (Drums) Casey Jones (Drums), (Vocals) John Littlejohn (Slide Guitar) Magic Slim (Guitar), (Vocals) John Primer (Guitar), (Vocals) Aron Burton (Bass), (Vocals) Nick Holt (Bass) Billy Branch (Harmonica) Sunnyland Slim (Piano)

Valerie Wellington took the Chicago blues scene by surprise in 1982, perhaps not forgoing her classical training as an opera singer as much as using it to enhance her work in the blues. As a blueswoman she fit right in, not only becoming a regular in the blues clubs but also compiling an impressive theatrical resume for her portrayals of Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith -- women who, like opera singers, learned to project their voices without microphones. The influence of Koko Taylor was also evident in Wellington's blues approach, which combined classic vaudeville-era blues with hard-driving Chicago sounds. Her power-packed voice was heard on only a few record releases but was featured frequently in TV and radio commercials. Valerie Wellington was only 33 years old when she died of a brain aneurysm. ---Jim O'Neal, Rovi

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