

## Sonny Boy Williamson II - Goin' in Your Direction (1954)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Goin' in Your Direction*
2. *From the Bottom*
3. *No Nights by Myself*
4. *Boppin' With Sonny*
5. *Empty Bedroom*
6. *Red Hot Kisses*
7. *Gettin' Out of Town*
8. *Cat Hop*
9. *She Brought Life Back to the Dead*
10. *I'm Not Beggin' Nobody [Alternate Take][#]*
11. *She's Crazy [Alternate Take][#]*
12. *Sonny's Rhythm, No. 2 [Alternate Take][#]*
13. *Make a Little Love With Me - Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, Sonny Boy Williamson*
14. *Gonna Find My Baby - Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, Sonny Boy Williamson*
15. *Catfish Blues - Bobo "Slim" Thomas, Sonny Boy Williamson*

Sonny Boy Williamson (II)'s early-50s waxings for Trumpet Records are not as well-known as his Chess sides, but they are a very important part of his legacy, and while the fidelity is not stellar, the performances are terrific.

I called this "early" Sonny Boy, and it is in terms of recorded material, but Rice Miller was already in his 50s when these performances were taped, and had played with men like Robert Johnson and Elmore James down in the Delta in the 30s. So his inimitable harmonica style was already in place on these his first recordings, and his characteristic vocals and his way with words were fully developed as well. One of these songs features Bobo Thomas as the lead vocalist...his "Catfish Blues" was reportedly put on the flipside of Elmore James' lone 1951

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single "I Believe I'll Dust My Broom", a recording which also featured Rice Miller on harmonica. Arthur "Big Boy" Crudup, the man behind "That's All Right Mama", sings on two numbers, and on the 1954 single "From The Bottom" a young B.B. King is credited as the guitar player.

But this is mainly Sonny Boy's show. He lays down tremendous, gritty performances of "Goin' In Your Direction", "I'm Not Beggin' Nobody", and the thumping, syncopated "Gettin' Out Of Town", as well as several others, including "She Brought Life Back To The Dead" and the driving "Empty Bedroom", which give Sonny Boy's best Chess sides a run for their money. The swinging "Red Hot Kisses" features great piano playing from David Campbell, and pianist Willie Love and guitarist Joe Willie Wilkins are also among the musicians. Love is particularly great on "She's Crazy", contributing mightily to the deep, swaggering groove of the track.

Sonny Boy fans should rush to secure themselves a copy of this excellent collection. Alligator has found a real treasure trove with these wonderful Trumpet sides, and this is in no way second-rate material...this is Sonny Boy Williamson at his best. ---Docendo Discimus, amazon.com

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