

Watermelon Slim
Escape From the Chicken Coop
Northern Blues, 2009

A few years ago when chatting with Slim, he expressed the desire to record a CD of country western music but was afraid he'd offend his fans. Manly man songs, truck drivin' songs. Well, hang

on, this is it. None of his backing band The Drivers are present here; it's strictly studio musicians from Nashville. And it makes sense. After all, if you're going to make a C&W CD, why not go to the heart of it all and record it in Nashville using musicians and technicians that specialize in that genre of music.

Each song here has something to do with truck driving. From the opening track of *Caterpillar Whine* to the closing track of *18,18 Wheeler* Slim lays down some stinging slide guitar and as always, his ability of writing storytelling lyrics are just a reflection on real life. *Skinny Women and Fat Cigars* is a tribute to all the things worthwhile in life while *You See Me Like I See You* is a duet reminiscent to the late Porter Waggoner and Dolly Parton. The dedication of this CD to Dave Dudley whose song *Six Days on the Road* has become a country anthem is just another sign that Slim hasn't strayed far from his own truck driving life.

Wreck on the Highway pays a gospel tribute to the lives lost on the road while Hank Williams You Wrote My Life explains the parallels between Hanks songs and Slims life.

I have to admit when I first put this CD in and heard the opening notes, I scratched my head and went, "What the...??" But after listening to it several times, I found myself appreciating the desire and drive it took for Slim to make this CD. And I like it. It's all things country: lap steel, country slide guitar, dobro, violin, banjo, honky tonk piano, truck driving' songs and most of all, Slim's spirit and commitment. I'll be seeing Slim at the Madison Ribberfest later on this year and I find myself hoping that he plays every song off this release. Congrats Slim, this is a great CD.