

A Slick Story

by David James

After Slick Daddy — aka Billy Ray Thompson — gave up driving his log truck and took up with playing and singing the blues full-time he was what you might call a hot property around the juke joints along Highway 61.

The women didn't seem to mind his slight limp and plump belly when his brow would furrow and he'd whip out his mouth harp and start a blues number, pushing out those moanful sounds. You could see their lonely expressions unravel into smiles, spoiling the sadness that they brought with them into the honky tonks from the everyday sameness of their lives. Ol' Slick told me once that playing music and feeling their adoration helped him, too. No longer did he feel hounded to escape the boredom of daytime truck driving by using a razor blade, separating those lines of white powder.

He said he was cured when he found he could count on going home with one of the evening ladies, having a nice, late night snack, usually a pulled pork sandwich, but sometimes some red beans and rice. He smiled and told me then there was always some other stuff for dessert.

