

Organ Grinder Blues

Words & Music:
Clarence Williams

I didn't know this classic, now I do. Thanks, Stephen Kermode! Ethel Waters & Victoria Spivey are but two of the artists who covered this barrelhouse tune. While the song ostensibly refers to the hurdy-gurdy players you'd see on the street in early 20th century America, the lyrics are probably a double-entendre.

E A E
Organ grinder, organ grinder, organ grinder, play that melody.
B A E
Take your organ, grinder, and grind some more for me.

Grind it north, grind it north, grind it north, grind it east or west.
But when you grind it slow, that's when I like it best.

Organ grinder, organ grinder,
You don't have to pass your hat around any more.
'Cause you're just the grinder I've been waitin' for.

Organ grinder, organ grinder, your sweet music seems to ease my mind.
It's not only your organ, but it's the way you grind.

Organ grinder, organ grinder,
Organ grinder, you've found that sweet lost chord.
Start grindin', and grind your room & board.

Organ grinder, organ grinder,
Organ grinder, don't tell me you're through.
'Cause if you want a little intermission,
Then mama's gonna grind a while for you.

Organ grinder, organ grinder,
Organ grinder, I will give you anything you choose.
If you'll just cure my organ, of those grinding blues.