

Beast of Burden

(The Rolling Stones)

[Intro]

I'll never be your beast of burden
My back is broad but it's a hurting
All I want is for you to make love to me

I'll never be your beast of burden
I've walked for miles my feet are hurting
All I want is for you to make love to me

Am I hard enough
Am I rough enough
Am I rich enough
I'm not too blind to see

I'll never be your beast of burden
So let's go home and draw the curtains
Music on the radio
Come on baby make sweet love to me

Am I hard enough
Am I rough enough
Am I rich enough
I'm not too blind to see

Oh little sister
Pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, girl

[Bridge]
Pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty girl
Pretty, pretty
Such a pretty, pretty, pretty girl
Come on baby please, please, please

I'll tell you you can put me out on the street
Put me out with no shoes on my feet
But, put me out, put me out
Put me out of misery

Yeah, all your sickness I can suck it up
Throw it all at me I can shrug it off
There's one thing baby that I don't
understand
You keep on telling me I ain't your kind of
man

Ain't I rough enough, oh honey
Ain't I tough enough
Ain't I rich enough in love enough
Oh please

I'll never be your beast of burden
I'll never be your beast of burden
Never, never, never, never, never, never,
never be

I'll never be your beast of burden
I've walked for miles my feet are hurting
All I want is for you to make love to me

I don't need the beast of burden
I need no fussing
I need no nursing
Never, never, never, never, never, never,
never be

The Rolling Stones "Beast of Burden" was featured on the 1978 album *Some Girls*. In 2004, *Rolling Stone* magazine ranked the song #435 on their list of "The 500 Greatest Songs of All Time" and #433 on the 500 Greatest Rock and Roll Songs of All Time.

A "beast of burden" is an animal, usually domesticated, that labors for the benefit of man, such as an ox or horse. The music and some lyrics were primarily written by Keith Richards. In the liner notes to the 1993 compilation disc *Jump Back*, Richards said *Beast of Burden* "was another one where Mick (Jagger) just filled in the verses. With the Stones, you take a long song, play it and see if there are any takers. Sometimes they ignore it, sometimes they grab it and record it. After all the faster numbers of *Some Girls*, everybody settled down and enjoyed the slow one."

In those same notes, Jagger says, "Lyrically, this wasn't particularly heartfelt in a personal way. It's a soul begging song, an attitude song. It was one of those where you get one melodic lick, break it down and work it up; there are two parts here which are basically the same." The song can be seen as allegorical, with Richards saying in 2003, "When I returned to the fold after closing down the laboratory [referring to his drug problems throughout the 1970s], I came back into the studio with Mick... to say, 'Thanks, man, for shouldering the burden' - that's why I wrote "Beast of Burden" for him, I realise in retrospect."

"Beast of Burden" was recorded from October–December 1977. Although basic lyrics were written before the Stones entered the studio, many of the lyrics on the recording were improvised by Jagger to fit with the smooth running guitars of Richards and Ronnie Wood. Characteristically, Richards and Wood trade off rolling, fluid licks. Neither is really playing lead or rhythm guitar; they both slip in and out, one playing high while the other is low. The song is another famed *Some Girls* song that features each band member playing his respective instrument without any outside performers; both Richards and Wood play acoustic and electric guitars, with Wood performing the solo.