

Like a Rolling Stone

(Bob Dylan)

Once upon a time you dressed so fine
Threw the bums a dime in your prime, didn't
you?

People call, say, "Beware doll, you're bound
to fall,"

You thought they were all a'kiddin' you
You used to laugh about

Everybody that was hangin' out

Now you don't talk so loud

Now you don't seem so proud

About having to be scrounging your next
meal

How does it feel?

How does it feel?

To be without a home?

Like a complete unknown?

Like a rolling stone?

Aw, you've gone to the finest school all
right, Miss Lonely

But ya' know ya' only used to get juiced in it
Nobody's ever taught ya' how to live out on
the street

And now you're gonna have to get used to it
You say you never compromise

With the mystery tramp but now you realize
He's not selling any alibis

As you stare into the vacuum of his eyes
And say, "Do you want to make a deal?"

How does it feel?

How does it feel?

To be on your own

With no direction home

A complete unknown

Like a rolling stone?

Aw, you never turned around to see the
frowns

On the jugglers and the clowns when they
all did tricks for you

Never understood that it ain't no good
You shouldn't let other people get your kicks
for you

You used to ride on a chrome horse with
your diplomat

Who carried on his shoulder a Siamese cat
Ain't it hard when you discover that

He really wasn't where it's at

After he took from you everything he could
steal?

How does it feel?

How does it feel?

To hang on your own

With no direction home

Like a complete unknown

Like a rolling stone?

Aw, princess on the steeple and all the pretty
people

They're all drinkin', thinkin' that they got it
made

Exchangin' all precious gifts

But you'd better take your diamond ring, ya'
better pawn it, babe

You used to be so amused

At Napoleon in rags and the language that
he used

Go to him now, he calls ya', ya' can't refuse
When ya' ain't got nothin', you got nothin' to
lose

You're invisible now, ya' got no secrets to
conceal

How does it feel?

Aw, how does it feel?

To be on your own

With no direction home

Like a complete unknown

Like a rolling stone?

"Like a Rolling Stone" is a 1965 song by the American singer-songwriter Bob Dylan. Its confrontational lyrics originated in an extended piece of verse Dylan wrote in June 1965, when he returned exhausted from a grueling tour of England. Dylan distilled this draft into four verses and a chorus. "Like a Rolling Stone" was recorded a few weeks later as part of the sessions for the forthcoming album *Highway 61 Revisited*.

During a difficult two-day preproduction, Dylan struggled to find the essence of the song, which was demoed without success in 3/4 time. A breakthrough was made when it was tried in a rock music format, and rookie session musician Al Kooper improvised the organ riff for which the track is known. However, Columbia Records was unhappy with both the song's length at over six minutes and its heavy electric sound, and was hesitant to release it. It was only when a month later a copy was leaked to a new popular music club and heard by influential DJs that the song was put out as a single. Although radio stations were reluctant to play such a long track, "Like a Rolling Stone" reached number two in the US Billboard charts (number one in Cashbox) and became a worldwide hit.

Critics have described the track as revolutionary in its combination of different musical elements, the youthful, cynical sound of Dylan's voice, and the directness of the question "How does it feel?" "Like a Rolling Stone" transformed Dylan's image from folk singer to rock star, and is considered one of the most influential compositions in postwar popular music. According to review aggregator Acclaimed Music, "Like a Rolling Stone" is the statistically most acclaimed song of all time. Rolling Stone magazine listed the song at number one in their "500 Greatest Songs of All Time" list. The song has been covered by numerous artists, from The Jimi Hendrix Experience and The Rolling Stones to The Wailers and Green Day. At an auction in 2014, Dylan's handwritten lyrics to the song fetched \$2 million, a world record for a popular music manuscript.

In the spring of 1965, after returning from the tour of England documented in the film *Dont Look Back*, Dylan was unhappy with the public's expectations of him, as well as the direction his career was taking, and seriously considered quitting the music business. In a 1966 *Playboy* interview, he described his dissatisfaction: "Last spring, I guess I was going to quit singing. I was very drained, and the way things were going, it was a very draggy situation ... But 'Like a Rolling Stone' changed it all. I mean it was something that I myself could dig. It's very tiring having other people tell you how much they dig you if you yourself don't dig you."

The song grew out of an extended piece of verse. In 1966, Dylan described its genesis to journalist Jules Siegel:

It was ten pages long. It wasn't called anything, just a rhythm thing on paper all about my steady hatred directed at some point that was honest. In the end it wasn't hatred, it was telling someone something they didn't know, telling them they were lucky. Revenge, that's a better word. I had never thought of it as a song, until one day I was at the piano, and on the paper it was singing, "How does it feel?" in a slow motion pace, in the utmost of slow motion.