

Humble Pie - Rock On (1971)

Written by bluesever

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A1 Shine On 3:00 A2 Sour Grain 2:40 A3 79th And Sunset 2:59 A4 Stone Cold Fever 4:08 A5 Rolling Stone 5:57 B1 A Song For Jenny 2:34 B2 The Light 3:16 B3 Big George 4:07 B4 Strange Days 6:33 B5 Red Neck Jump 3:05 Bass, Guitar, Vocals – Greg Ridley
Drums, Keyboards – Jerry Shirley Guitar, Keyboards, Vocals – Peter Pedal Steel Guitar – B. J. Cole
Saxophone – Bobby Keys Vocals – Alexis Korner Vocals, Guitar, Keyboards, Harmonica [Harp] – Steve

On this, their second album for A&M, Humble Pie proved that they were not the "minor league Rolling Stones" as people often described them. Led by the soulful Steve Marriott, the Pie was a great band in every sense of the word. Although Peter Frampton elevated himself to superstar status in just a few years, this album proves what an excellent lead guitarist he was. The record has an undeniable live feel to it, due in part to Glyn Johns' humble yet precise recording, framing the group as if they were a boogie version of the Band. When all of these elements come together on songs such as "Sour Grain" and "Stone Cold Fever," it's an unbeatable combination. ---Matthew Greenwald, AllMusic Review

Humble Pie I suspect were probably more incendiary as a live proposition, than their recorded output conveyed. Their form of blues rock went down better in America, than the UK, where they were in competition in 71 with the likes of The Stones, Zeppelin, Yes, The Who, Tull's Aqualung, Bowie, T Rex and the ascendancy of prog and glam. Also they didn't dress in outlandish garb to get noticed. I for one knew of them at that time but knew little about them. Playing it now, I must admit it took more than a few plays for the enjoyment meter to rise. Initially it just sounded a bit bread and butter, uneven, with its blues, soul, rock and bar room slants, but with a number of plays, I now enjoy it for what it is, but they lacked the idiosyncrasies

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of the former which was the draw at the time.

Several tracks jar, for example the atmospheric rock song Strange Days with a funky feel, my personal highlight is sandwiched between two forgettable barroom songs. Of course we have Frampton songs and Marriot songs while stylistically different are not unharmonious. Lyrically interesting is "79th and Sunset," "She's got nut crushin' boobs and jam tart lips, " but the highlights are Stone Cold Fever and for blues afficiendos Rollin' Stone which in rock terms are the hardest on the album where one feels Steve Marriot could give himself an aneurysm. Overall, an album with it's moments but just not classic, an album I can enjoy but not one where I can garner any emotional attachment. Those who caught them live will no doubt have a contrasting view. ---oldrock, rateyourmusic.com

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