

I've Got What It Takes (but It Breaks My Heart To Give It Away)

Bessie Smith

Oh, stingy Jenny saved up all her pennies,
Straight to the bank she would go.
The sharks would hound her, hands around her,
But none could get her dough.

Jenny's fella was a slick high yella;
Sent away to jail one day.
He cried for bail then turned real pale,
When he heard Jenny say:

"I've got what it takes
But it breaks my heart to give it away!
It's in demand, they wants it everyday.
I've been saving it up for a long, long time,
To give it away would be more than a crime.
Your eyes may roll, your teeth may grit
But none of my money will you get.

You can look at my bankbook,
But I'll never let you feel my purse.
'Cause I'm one woman believes in safety first, safety first!
Say, if you want my money, here's my plan:
I'm saving it up for a real good man!
I've got what it takes,
But it breaks my heart to give it away!

I've got what it takes,
But it breaks my heart to give it away.
It's in demand, folks crying for it every day.
I've been saving it up for a long, long time,
To give it away would be more than a crime.
Your eyes may roll, your teeth may grit
But none of this small change will you get!

You can look at my bankbook,
But I'll never let you put your hands on my purse
Lord, I'm one woman believes in safety first, safety first!
Say, if you want my money, here's my plan:
I'm not saving it up for the next good man!
I've got what it takes,
But it breaks my heart to give it away!"