

## Phil Ochs "The Party"

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The fire-breathing Rebels arrive at the party early,  
Their khaki coats are hung in the closet near the fur.  
Asking handouts from the ladies, while they criticize  
the lords.  
Boasting of the murder of the very hands that pour.  
And the victims learn to giggle, for at least they are not  
bored.  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug  
And retune my piano.

The Hostess is enormous, she fills the room with  
perfume,  
She meets the guests and smothers them with  
greetings.  
And she asks "how are you" as she offers them a drink,  
The Countess of the social grace, who never seems to  
blink.  
And she promises to talk to you, if you promise not to  
think.  
And my shoulders had to shrug, as I crawled beneath  
the rug  
And retuned my piano.

The Beauty of the hour is blazing in the present,  
She surrounds herself with those who would surrender.  
Floating in her flattery she's a trophy-prize, caressed.  
Protected by a pretty face, sometimes cursed,  
sometimes blessed.  
And she's staring down their desires, while they're  
staring down her dress.  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug  
And retune my piano.

The egos shine like lightbulbs, so bright you cannot see  
them,  
Blind each other blinder than a sandbox.  
All the fury of an argument, holding back their yawns,  
A challenge shakes the chandliers, the selfish swords  
are drawn.  
To the loser go the hangups, to the victor go the

hangers on.  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug  
And retune my piano.

They travel to the table, the host is served for supper,  
And they pass each other down for salt and pepper.  
And the conversation sparkles as their wits are dipped  
in wine,  
Dinosaurs on a diet, on each other they will dine.  
Then they pick their teeth and they squelch a belch  
saying:  
"Darling you tasted divine."  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug  
And retune my piano.

The Wallflower is waiting, she hides behind  
composure.  
She'd love to dance and prays that no one asks her.  
Then she steals a glance at lovers while her fingers  
tease her hair.  
And she marvels at the confidence of those who hide  
their fears.  
Then her eyes are closed as she rides away with a  
foreign legionaire.  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug  
And retune my piano.

Romeo is reeling, counting notches on his thighbone,  
Searching for one hundred and eleven.  
And he's charming as a cherub as he leads you to his  
web,  
Seducing queens and gypsy girls in the boudoir of his  
head.  
Then he wraps himself with a tablecloth and pretends  
he is a bed.  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug  
And retune my piano.

The party must be over, even the Losers are leaving.  
But just one doubt is nagging at my caustic mind:  
So I snuck up close behind me and I gave myself a kiss,  
And I led myself to the mirror to expose what I had  
missed.  
There I saw a laughing maniac who was writing songs  
like this.  
And my shoulders had to shrug  
As I crawl beneath the rug

And retune my piano.

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