

# Phil Ochs, The Party

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.