

Phish, Esther (Alternate Version)

On a hot summer night, in a small western town,
At a carnival down by the water,
A young woman walked through the fairgrounds alone
Esther, the archbishop's daughter

She walked past the carousel down to the lake
Where she spotted a wrinkled old man
Who stood by the side of a broken-down hut
With a bucket held firm in his hand

The old man approached her and whispered his plea
"Won't you please take this gift that I offer?"
A beautiful puppet of violet and gold,
Of velvet and satin and lace

And he looked at the girl with a powerful gaze
And she stared at the bucket bewildered
Till he lifted the doll for the young girl to see
And a giant smile grew on her face

The doll was as pretty as any she'd seen
And she thanked the man quickly and ran to the church

And she burst through the doorway with puppet held high
And a hush filled the chapel, and the people looked mean . .

(same lyrics as current ones, until the last three verses:) . .

As Esther stood and shook her head the joggers were approaching
And she knew she had no choice left but to swim
As she dove into the water she saw a flicker in the distance
It was the place she got the puppet that had made her life so grim

When she reached the shore she pulled her icy body from the water
Saw the carnival, and then she saw the shack
And she ran across the fairgrounds to the old man with the bucket
And she took the puppet out and gave it back!

Up from the water came thousands of souls
Joggers and muggers and church-going folk
And they all ran past Esther towards the old man
Like a raging stampede they dissolved in a huge cloud of dust....