The Party

Phil Ochs

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 boredAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoThe hostess is enormous, she fills the room with perfume
She meets the guests and smothers them with greetings.
And she asks, "How are you" and 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 thinkAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoThe 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 dressAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoThe egos shine like light bulbs, 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 chandeliers, the selfish swords are drawn
To the loser go the hangups, to the victor go the hangers onAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoThey 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 crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoThe wallflower is waiting, she hides behind composure, 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 legionnaireAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoRomeo is reeling, counting notches on his thighbone
Searching for one hundred and eleven
And he's charming as a child 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 bedAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my pianoOh, 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 thisAnd my shoulders had to shrug
As I crawled beneath the rug and retuned my piano

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