

# Mp3 Esther Sparks - Esther And The Protesters



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Freak folk 15 MP3 Songs FOLK: Political, FOLK: like Ani Details: Growing up on a commune in a castle in Scotland taught modern day troubadour Esther Sparks that there is no distinction between life and art. Surrounded by a gigantic extended family that included her grandparents and great-grandparents, uncles and aunts amid a close-knit community that peaked at nearly 150 people, she learned at a young age that music was simply part of life. She says, Our home was always filled with music- there were five pianos and hundreds of guys with guitars playing folk music. She grew up listening to homegrown music, performed live by the many musicians, some just passing through, and recordings of legends such as Joan Baez and Cat Stevens. Her early life was so drenched in song that she actually told her elementary school teacher that Bob Dylan lived at her house. Sparks was encouraged by all to pursue the muse and by her early teens she was lending her stunning voice to a wide range of styles. She sang in a gospel choir, with a reggae band and with the ubiquitous Celtic bands that performed around Dumbarton, the nearest town to her home in the rural hill country of Western Scotland. Her mesmerizing stage presence was honed performing with her uncles, who would go into town dressed as clowns, and busking in the streets. She says, I got used to being in front of people at a very young age and I became fearless about performing. Heading into Glasgow for college, Sparks realized that if she wanted to be serious about music, she had to write her own songs. Tracy Chapman became an influence as she began developing her own original style. In 1996, she came to the United States as a performer at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. She met her future husband and chose an unanticipated path that led to an uncertain future in New Orleans. Three babies later, Sparks is content with her life in the Crescent City and the balance between motherhood and music. She says, I had trouble with the culture in New Orleans at first and though I played out a bit, I never made a lasting impression. She continues, My early songs were dark

and moody and when I tried to write songs for dancing and drinking, they sounded contrived. Her close association with producer Mike West led to her first album, *Dirty Little Fingers*, which reflects her early years in New Orleans as well as the birth of her first two children. Though she says she never thought motherhood would provide inspiration, she equates maturing in life with maturing in art. She says, You come out of the end of your 20s and things fall together and you find contentment with your role in life. For Sparks, contentment means being a mother and a wife as well as an artist with compelling songs, a personal musical style and an uncommon voice.

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