Oh Sister

Dan Bern

They say you taught me how to talk
I bet you wish you taught me how to stop
You're far away now
I wish I could take a walk with you someplaceYou explained me to our parents
English wasn't their first language
They spoke German, hated Germans
Confusing timesOh sister
Down Midwest backseat bumpy streets
You sang my Beatles songs with me
I sang your Broadway melodies
Bad harmoniesAnd where would Willie Mays have been
Without Jackie Robinson?
And who can say what I'd been
Without you to lead the wayAfter I showed some guys I could drink
You picked me off the lawn, I think
And led me to the kitchen sink
Where I got rid of itSome nights I lay awake in awe
As squinting through the dark I saw
You peeling off your teenage bra
The door slightly ajarOh sister
You lived just across the hall
For eighteen summers, eighteen falls
Until you went away to that
Weird college in WisconsinAnd where would Willie Mays have been
without Jackie Robinson?
And who can say what I'd been
Without you to lead the wayTrust yourself
And you can do anything
This I give to youMay your heart purr like a bumblebee
May all your backyards have a tree
May you always be HIV negativeI hope you meet a nice guy who
Treats women better than I do
I don't even care if he's a Jew or notOh sister
I remember in the temple hall
At our dear father's funeral
You sang like a nightingale
One of his own songsAnd where would Willie Mays have been
Without Jackie Robinson?
And who can say what I'd been

Without you to lead the way

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