

We Americans

The Avett Brothers

I grew up with reverence for the red white and blue
Spoke of God and liberty, reciting the pledge of allegiance
Learned love of country from my own family
Some shivered and prayed approaching the beaches of normandy
The flag waves high and that's how it should be
So many lives given and taken in the name of freedom
But the story's complicated and hard to read
Pages of the book obscured or torn out completely

I am a son of Uncle Sam
And I struggle to understand the good and evil
But I'm doing the best I can
In a place built on stolen land with stolen people

Blood in the soil with the cotton and tobacco
Blood in the soil with the cotton and tobacco
Blood in the soil with the cotton and tobacco

A misnamed people and a kidnapped race
Laws may change but we can't erase the scars of a nation
Of children devalued and disavowed
Displaced by greed and the arrogance of manifest destiny
Short-sighted to say it was a long time ago
Not even two lifetimes have past since the days of Lincoln
The sins of Andrew Jackson, the shame of Jim Crow
And time moves slow when the tragedies are beyond description

I am a son of Uncle Sam
And I struggle to understand the good and evil
But I'm doing the best I can
In a place built on stolen land with stolen people

We are more than the sum of our parts
All these broken homes and broken hearts
God will you keep us wherever we go
Will you forgive us for where we've been
We Americans

Blood on the table with the coffee and the sugar
Blood on the table with the coffee and the sugar
Blood on the table with the coffee and the sugar

I've been to every state, seen shore to shore
The still open wounds of the civil war
Watched blind hatred bounce back and forth
Seen vile prejudice both in the south and the north
And accountability is hard to impose
On ghosts of ancestors haunting the halls of our conscience
But the path of grace and goodwill is still here,
For those of us who may be considered among the living

I am a son of God and man
And I may never understand the good and evil
But I dearly love this land
Because of, and in spite of we the people

We are more than the sum of our parts

All these broken bones and broken hearts
God will you keep us wherever we go
Can you forgive us for where we've been
We Americans
We Americans

Love in our hearts with the pain and the memory
Love in our hearts with the pain and the memory
Love in our hearts with the pain and the memory