One Dance

Dan Bern

They say you taught me how to talk Bet you wish you taught me how to stop You're far away now, wish I could take a walk with you someplace You explained me to our parents English wasn't their first language They spoke German, hated Germans Confusing times Oh sister Down midwest backseat bumpy seats You sang my beatles songs with me I sang your Broadway melodies, bad harmony And where would Willie Mays have been Without Jackie Robinson And who can say what I'd been Without you to lead the way After I showed some guys I could drink You picked me of the lawn I think And led me to the kitchen sink Where I got rid of it Some nights I lay awake in awe As squinting through the dark I saw You peeling off your teenage bra The door slightly ajar Oh sister You lived just across the hall For 18 summers, 18 falls Until you went away to that weird college in Wisconsin And where would Willie Mays have been Without Jackie Robinson And who can say what I'd been Without you to lead the way Trust yourself, and you can do anything This I give to you May your heart purr like a bumblebee May all your backyards have a tree May you always be HIV negative I hope you meet some guy who Treats women better than I do I don't even care if he's a Jew or not Oh sister I remember in the temple hall At out dear father's funeral you sang like a nightingale One of his own songs And where would Willie Mays have been Without Jackie Robinson And who can say what I'd been Without you to lead the way