

# **The one on the right was on the left**

Written by Jack Clement. Recorded by Johnny Cash, 1965

There [A] once was a musical [A7] troupe a [D] picking singing [A] folk group  
they [D] sang the mountain [A] ballads and the [G] folk songs of our [E7] land  
They were [A] long on musical [A7] ability folks [D] thought they'd go [A] far  
but [D] political incompatibility [A] [E7] led to their down [A] fall

well the [D] one on the right was [A] on the left  
and the [E7] one in the middle was [A] on the right  
and the [D] one on the left was [A] in the middle  
and the [E7] guy in the rear was a [A] Methodist

This [A] musical [A7] aggregation [D] toured the entire [A] nation  
singing [D] the traditional [A] ballads and the [G] folk songs of our [E7] land  
they performed [A] with great [A7] virtuosity and [D] soon they were the [A] rage  
but [D] political ani[A]mosity [E7] prevailed upon the [A] stage

well the [D] one on the right was [A] on the left  
and the [E7] one in the middle was [A] on the right  
and the [D] one on the left was [A] in the middle  
and the [E7] guy in the rear burned his [A] driver's license

Well [A] the curtain had [A7] ascended a [D] hush fell [A] on the crowd  
as [D] thousands there were [A] gathered to hear the [G] folk songs of our [E7] land  
but they took [A] their politics seriously and that [D] night at the concert [A] hall  
as the [D] audience watched de[A]liriously [E7] they had a free-for-[A] all

well the [D] one on the right was [A] on the bottom  
and the [E7] one in the middle was [A] on the top  
and the [D] one on the left got [A] a broken arm  
and the [E7] guy in the rear, said, "oh [A] dear"

Now [A] this should be a [A7] lesson if you [D] plan to start [A] a folk group  
Don't [D] go mixing [A] politics with the [G] folk songs of our [E7] land  
just [A] work on harmony and [A7] diction [D] play your banjo [A] well  
and if you [D] have political con[A]victions [E7] keep 'em to your[A]self

now the [D] one on the left works [A] in a bank  
and the [E7] one in the middle [A] drives a truck  
the one [D] on the right's an [A] all-night deejay  
and the [E7] guy in the rear got [A] drafted