

Paul Simon, How Can You Live In The Northeast

We heard the fireworks.
Rushed out to watch the sky.
Happy go lucky.
Fourth of July.

How can you live in the Northeast?
How can you live in the South?
How can you build on the banks of a river
when the flood water pours from the mouth?
How can you be a Christian?
How can you be a Jew?
How can you be a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Hindu?
How can you?

Weak as the winter sun,
we enter life on earth.
Names and religion come
just after date of birth.
Then everybody gets a tongue to speak,
and everyone hears an inner voice.
A day at the end of the week
to wonder and rejoice.
If the answer is infinite light,
why do we sleep in the dark?

How can you live in the Northeast?
How can you live in the South?
How can you build on the banks of a river
when the flood water pours from the mouth?
How can you tattoo your body?
Why do you cover your head?
How can you eat from a rice bowl,
the holy man only breaks bread?

We watched the fireworks,
'til they were fireflies.
Followed a path of stars,
over the endless skies.

How can you live in the Northeast?
How can you live in the South?
How can you build on the banks of a river
when the flood water pours from the mouth?

I've been given all I wanted.
Only three generations off the boat.
I have harvested and I've planted.
I am wearing my father's old coat.