

# Both Sides Now

by Joni Mitchell

Rows and flocs of angel hair  
And ice cream castles in the air  
And feather canyons everywhere  
I've looked at clouds that way

But now they only block the sun  
They rain and snow on everyone  
So many things I would have done  
But clouds got in my way

I've looked at clouds from both sides now  
From up and down, and still somehow  
It's cloud illusions I recall  
I really don't know clouds at all

Moons and Junes and Ferris wheels  
The dizzy dancing way you feel  
As every fairy tale comes real  
I've looked at love that way

But now it's just another show  
You leave 'em laughing when you go  
And if you care, don't let them know  
Don't give yourself away

I've looked at love from both sides now  
From give and take, and still somehow  
It's love's illusions I recall  
I really don't know love at all

Tears and fears and feeling proud  
To say "I love you" right out loud  
Dreams and schemes and circus crowds  
I've looked at life that way

But now old friends are acting strange  
They shake their heads, they say I've changed  
Well something's lost, but something's gained  
In living every day

I've looked at life from both sides now  
From win and lose and still somehow  
It's life's illusions I recall  
I really don't know life at all

I've looked at life from both sides now  
From up and down and still somehow  
It's life's illusions I recall  
I really don't know life at all

© June 19, 1967; Gandalf Publishing Co. (as "From Both Sides Now")

*Printed from the official Joni Mitchell website. Permanent link: <https://jonimitchell.com/music/song.cfm?id=83>*

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## **Both Sides Now**, by Joni Mitchell

**Meaning.** To proclaim that you're looking at a matter "from both sides now" is the recognition of one's own limits of knowledge, understanding, and perspective as well as our lack of control over reality.

Having looked at clouds, love, and life from the bliss of idealism as well as the gloom of pessimism, one sees that our perceptions are a matter of our perspective; and that even for the same person, this can change throughout life.

Even as we swear we understand and know about the world, love, and the meaning of our lives, we come to realize that really don't know these things after all.