

Tamburitza Lingua

Ani Difranto

A cold and porcelain lonely in an old New York hotel
A stranger to a city that she used to know so well
Bathing in a bathroom that is bathed in the first blue light
Of the beginning of a century at the end of an endless night
Then she is wet behind the ears and wafting down the avenue
Pre-rush hour, post-rain shower
Stillness seeping upwards like steam
From another molten sewer summer in New York
They've been spraying us
With chemicals in our sleep
Us, they
Something about the mosquitoes
Having some kind of disease
Them, me
CIA foul play if you ask the guy
Selling hair dryers out of a gym bag
Chemical warfare
"I'm telling you, lab rat to lab rat", he says
"That's where the truth is at"
That's where the truth is at
That's where the truth is at
And everything seems to have gone terribly wrong that can
But one breath at a time is an acceptable plan
She tells herself and the air is still there
And this morning it's even breathable
And for a second the relief is unbelievable
And she's a heavy sack of flour sifted her burden lifted
She's full of clean wind for one lean moment
And then she's trapped again
Reverted, caged and contorted
With no way to get free
And she's getting plenty of little kisses
But nobody's slippin' her the key
Her whole life is a long list of what ifs
And she doesn't even know where to begin
And the pageantry of suffering therein
Rivals television
TV is, after all, the modern day roman coliseum
Human devastation as mass entertainment

And now millions sit jeering collectively cheering
The bloodthirsty hierarchy of the patriarchal arrangement
She is hailing a cab
She is sailing down the avenue
She's 19 going on 30
Or maybe she's really 30 now
It's hard to say
It's hard to keep up with time once it's on its way
And, you know, she never had much of a chance
Born into a family built like an avalanche
And somewhere in the 80's between the Oat Bran and the Ozone
She started to figure out things like why
One eye pointed upwards looking for the holes in the sky
One eye on the little flashing red light
A Picasso face twisted and listing down the canvas
Of the end of an endless night
10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
And Kerplooeey you're done
You're done for, you're done for good
So tell me did you?
Did you do, did you do all you could?

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