

Difranco Ani

"School Night"

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she went over to his apartment
clutching her decision
and he said, did you come here to tell me goodbye?
so she built a skyscraper of procrastination
and then she leaned out the twenty-fifth floor window
of her reply
and she felt like an actress
just reading her lines
when she finally said
yes. it's really goodbye this time
and far below was the blacktop
and the tiny toy cars
and it all fell so fast
and it all fell so far

and she said:
you are a miracle but that is not all
you are also a stiff drink and i am on call
you are a party and i am a school night
and i'm lookin' for my door key
but you are my porch light

and you'll never know, dear
just how much i loved you
you'll probably think this was
just my big excuse
but i stand committed
to a love that came before you
and the fact that i adore you
is but one of my truths

what of the mother
whose house is in flames
and both of her children
are in their beds crying
and she loves them both
with the whole of her heart
but she knows she can only
carry one at a time?
she's choking on the smoke
of unthinkable choices

she is haunted by the voices
of so many desires
she's bent over from the business
of begging forgiveness
while frantically running around
putting out fires

but then what kind of scale
compares the weight of two beauties
the gravity of duties
or the ground speed of joy?
tell me what kind of gauge
can quantify elation?
what kind of equation
could i possibly employ?
and you'll never know, dear
just how much i loved you
you probably think this was
just my big excuse
but i stand committed
to a love that came before you
and the fact that i adore you
is just one of my truths

so i
i'm goin' home
to please the one i so love pleasing
and i don't expect
he'll have much sympathy for my grieving
but i guess that this is the price
that we pay for the privilege
of living for even a day
in a world with so many things
worth believing
in

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