

## Ani DiFranco "Tamburitzza Lingua"

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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 80s 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 seven six 5 4 three 2 one  
and kerplooy  
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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