

Shadows On A Dime

Ferron

This window makes a perfect frame
For New England leaves like painted rain
They hold me as I hold this train
All shadows on a dime.
You move forward fast by holding back
You gauge your steps and you don't look slack
Me I'm looking backward down the track
To see us dreamers in our prime.

I poured my soul in Santa Cruz
I ached all night,
Next day I lost my shoes
It's so optional what you may or may not lose
in this pattern we call time.

Fifteen years ago I worked the line
With a thousand more all doing time
While a foreman smiled complicit crime
We were strangers to the plan.
An old old woman ran the gears
She couldn't move
They said she'd been there forty years
...I think that's rude...
'Cause forty years is forty years
And I was only fifteen then.
The work waged war upon our backs
But we gauged our steps and we didn't look slack
One day the old woman didn't come back
I couldn't work so well and they let me go.

But I don't forget about the factory
I don't expect this ride to always be
Can I give you what you want to see?
Can we do it one more time?

Ten years have worn this guitar down
Its ivory whites are now mustard brown
Its face bears cracks from every town
Still it resonates with age.
Where would I be without its ring?
Who would I be if I didn't sing?
For half a chance you spare nothing --
A tethered bird to a tethered cage.

I sing to you to feed the dream
I call to you 'though it's a muted scream
We're one on one projected beams
Translucent future be our sage.

Five years have blazed since she warmed my side
She is my gift I've loved and cried
With her level look she is my guide
A spirit on the wing
Our love has jostled like this train
Or like the moon to wax and wane
But to know somebody worth the strain --
Me I have one gift to bring

I cried for here then I let her down
She let me go and then we came around
I felt us new and I felt the ground
And I felt myself believing.

And now a tired conductor passes by
He takes my ticket with a sigh
I don't think he meant to catch my eye
But he doesn't turn away.
He says "I have a daughter as old as you
And there's really nothing anyone else can do
Do you play guitar...well good for you
Me I play the violin"
I imagine him with his hair jet black
Does he hide his fiddle in the back?
He gauged his words as the train went slack:
The New York train stops here

But I don't forget the factory
I don't expect this ride to always be
Can I give them what they want to see
Let me do it twice --
The second time for me.

'Cause these windows make a perfect frame
For New York buildings like upright trains
They hold me as I hold the rain
Fleeting shadows on a dime.