

## 88 Constellations

Mary Chapin Carpenter

These days are made of leaving home  
But every thought is of returning  
In between is simply known for the gasoline I'm burning  
Drop the bags inside the door  
And out of habit pause to listen  
It's the same as before  
There's always something that feels missing

But not the ghosts and snakes I swept away  
Though that seemed as good a place to start

I go forward or fall back  
Forge ahead or veer off track  
Flaming out or fade to black  
Stars careening in their crosses  
Someone's always just ahead  
Heels dug in or being led  
Nothing's perfect I once said  
And I learned to cut my losses  
But I could not fix the broken part and a tear stained heart

I fill my passport with the miles  
Dawn is breaking out the window  
Climb the steps and walk the aisles  
Just another moving shadow  
You know it's easier to be all alone instead of lonely  
Yet I know some part of me  
Feels a part of you still owns me

Way down deep where it will not be seen  
But there's no doubt that you have left your mark

You go forward or fall back  
Forge ahead or veer off track  
Flaming out or fade to black  
Stars careening in their crosses  
Someone's always just ahead  
Heels dug in or being led  
Nothing's perfect you once said  
You're the king of all lost causes  
But I still wait for you because I'm not  
In my tear stained heart

These wondrous days we travel fast  
And the clearer I am seeing  
Trade the baggage of the past  
For the lightness of being  
I am studying the stars, all 88 constellations  
I can sense you from afar, from my earthly destinations

And in the wind and in every highway song  
A match that strikes or in a random spark

We go forward or fall back  
Forge ahead or veer off track  
Flaming out, we fade to black  
Stars careening as they beckon

It's just open road ahead  
The sound of twilight, maps unread  
Nothing's perfect it's been said  
This is pretty close I reckon

And I've learned more than I'd have ever thought  
From a tear stained heart