

Ani DiFranco, Coming Up

our father who art in a penthouse
sits in his 37th floor suite
and swivels to gaze down
at the city he made me in
he allows me to stand and
solicit graffiti until
he needs the land I stand on
I in my darkened threshold
am pawing through my pockets
the receipts, the bus schedules
the matchbook phone numbers
the urgent napkin poems
all of which laundering has rendered
pulpy and strange
loose change and a key
ask me
go ahead, ask me if I care
I got the answer here
I wrote it down somewhere
I just gotta find it
I just gotta find it
somebody and their spraypaint got too close
somebody came on too heavy
now look at me made ugly
by the drooling letters
I was better off alone
ain't that the way it is
they don't know the first thing
but you don't know that
until they take the first swing
my fingers are red and swollen from the cold
I'm getting bold in my old age
so go ahead, try the door
it doesn't matter anymore
I know the weakhearted are strongwilled
and we are being kept alive
until we're killed
he's up there the ice
is clinking in his glass
I don't ask
I just empty my pockets and wait
it's not fate
it's just circumstance
I don't fool myself with romance
I just live
phone number to phone number
dusting them against my thighs
in the warmth of my pockets
which whisper history incessantly
asking me
where were you
I lower my eyes
wishing I could cry more
and care less,
yes it's true,
I was trying to love someone again,
I was caught caring,
bearing weight
but I love this city, this state
this country is too large
and whoever's in charge up there
had better take the elevator down
and put more than change in our cup
or else we

are coming
up