

Ani DiFranco, Not So Soft

In a forest of stone
underneath the corporate canopy
where the sun
rarely
filters
down
the ground
is not so soft
not so soft
they build buildings to house people
making money
or they build buildings to make money
off of housing people
it's true
like a lot of things are true
I am foraging for a phone booth on the forest floor
that is not so soft
I look up
it looks like the buildings are burning
but it's just the sun setting
the solar system calling an end
to another business day
eternally circling signally
the rhythmic clicking on and off
of computers
the pulse
of the american machine
the pulse
that draws death dancing
out of anonymous side streets
you know
the ones that always get dumped on
and never get plowed
it draws death dancing
out of little countries
with funny languages
where the ground is getting harder
and it was
not
that
soft
before
those who call the shots
are never in the line of fire
why
where there's life for hire
out there
if a flag of truth were raised
we could watch every liar
rise to wave it
here
we learn america like a script
playwright
birthright
same thing
we bring
ourselves to the role
we're all rehearsing for the presidency
I always wanted to be
commander in chief
of my one woman army
but I can envision the mediocrity
of my finest hour
it's the failed america in me

it's the fear that lives
in a forest of stone
underneath the corporate canopy
where the sun
rarely
filters
down
and the ground
is not so soft