

Mary Chapin Carpenter, Ideas Are Like Stars

(Mary Chapin Carpenter)

Today Joseph is sitting alone, with occasional nods to the waitress
She tops off his cup while she's snapping her gum, making her rounds on the lunch shift
Counting out coins, he leaves them arranged, in neat lines and circles and arcs
She just stares at the tip that spells out her name and ideas are like stars

And yesterday pedaling down 4th Avenue, between the stalls and the bookshops
The sepia tones of a lost afternoon cradled a curio storefront
And inside the air was thick with the past, as the dust settled onto his heart
And here for a moment is every place in the world and ideas are like stars

They fall from the sky, they run round your head
They litter your sleep as they beckon
They'd teach you to fly without wires or thread
They promise if only you'd let them

For the language of longing never had words, so how did you speak from your heart
Yet here is a box that swears it has heard that ideas are like stars

Tonight Joseph stood out in the yard, as Debussy played from the kitchen
Celestial companions `til mornings first lark, shone overhead and he listened
And who was that shadow there by the gate, who was that there standing guard
It was only loneliness, and loneliness waits, and ideas are like stars
Ideas are like stars