

Mary Black

"Stones In The Road"

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(Mary Chapin Carpenter)

When we were young, we pledged allegiance every
morning of our lives
The classroom rang with children's voices under
teacher's watchful eye
We learned about the world around us at our desks
and at dinnertime
Reminded of the starving children, we cleaned our
plates with guilty minds
And the stones in the road shone like diamonds in the
dust
And then a voice called to us to make our way back
home

When I was ten, my father held me on his shoulders
above the crowd
To see a train draped in mourning pass slowly through
our town
His widow kneeled with all their children at the sacred
burial ground
And the TV glowed that long hot summer with all the
cities burning down

And the stones in the road flew out beneath our bicycle
tires
Worlds removed from all those fires as we raced each
other home

And now we drink our coffee on the run, we climb that
ladder rung by rung
We are the daughters and the sons, and here's the line
that's missing

The starving children have been replaced by souls out
on the street
We give a dollar when we pass, and hope our eyes
don't meet
We pencil in, we cancel out, we crave the corner suite
We kiss your ass, we make you hold, we doctor the
receipt

And the stones in the road fly out from beneath our
wheels
Another day, another deal, before we get back home

And the stones in the road leave a mark from whence
they came
A thousand points of light or shame, baby, I don't know

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