

Stones In The Road

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The starving children have been replaced
By souls out on the street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
They fly out from beneath our wheels
Another day, another deal
Before we get back home

Stones in the road
Leave a mark from whence they came
A thousand points of light or shame
Baby, I don't know