

Minimum Wage

Lila Downs

Travelled seven hundred miles
cross the border to the states
with a plastic bottle running
cross the desert in a shake
come to English only country
hidin' from the minute men
come to make this place my home
run a long, long way from them
story of a lifetime for the minimun wage

Well they chased me trough the desert
then the agents strapped me down
then they ask me why in Spanish
why you keep on comin' back
when I left my dad in Jersey
and my sisters in Des Moines
then been workin' in this country
pickin' lettuce, washing floors
story of a lifetime for the minimun wage

Well they raised me to eight dollars
'cause I washed the dishes fast
well the boss he got me workin'
on the porch and in the back
then I wash the dish and rinse it
then I go home, then I sleep
well I need to be real careful
'cause I walk out in my sleep
when I see thah black van comin'
then I know I'm sure to run
but a goddamn the agents caught me
and they caffed me on the spot
for the minimun wage

no one forced the boss to hire me
but it's nearly been fifteen
well I left my baby cryin' with
a promise in my skin
on the outskirts of L.A. I recite
a native poem million hands
ten thousand years, it's the season
for the crop, it's my people doin'
the pickin' in the valley of the dolls
it's a decent job to work it any day
I'll take this job

Ethiopian, Colombbian, Pakistani, Cantonese
every man that I run into
all the kitchens on the strip
and they're pluggin' in them hours
and they're smilin' in their dreams
they're a long, long way from home now
but they lookin' to be free
California, Alabama, and Missouri, Oregon
they been workin' like their fathers were
a long, long time ago
for the minimun wage

It's a bumpy road to ride in
But I'll take it anytime
It's a bumpy road to take
But I'll take it every day

It's a bumpy road to take
But I'll take it anytime
For the minimum wage