

Always The Mix and Blend By Malika Booker

It was a time when the clawed hands of politicians raked the land
into tunnels where seeds could not bloom.

A time when youths strained against these snapping crocodile jaws.

It was a time when hate fires raged in New Cross and sirens preyed on
black boys as these rugged youths whose shoe back ah bruk down,
rocked back to the sounds of two tone in black and white suits
bopping trilby and pork pie hats to the sounds of two tone.

At home Nephew Earl punched fifty pence into the electric meter,
tuned into, *Message to you Rudie*, on Top of The Pops
swigging cans of Special Brew while Uncle Tommy kissed his teeth,
swearing, *old time music come back again. How de dotish pickney them
ah spoil up good ole Jamaican tunes with this foolish mix and blend.*