Spring is an Angel, A Poem
Mama Linda’s Chapbook
The Peale, Baltimore
Recorded in May 2021

Mama Linda Goss (00:32):
Sometimes, I feel so alone. Although I've done no wrong. Oh Lord, stand by me, stand by me.
Sometimes, I feel so alone. Although I've done no wrong. Oh Lord, stand by me, stand by me.

Mama Linda Goss (00:34): Praise Song for the Caregiver. This poem is for all caregivers who are taking
care of someone, whether it's their parents, whether it's an auntie or a cousin. We take the caregivers
for granted. And so I wrote this poem as a tribute to the caregiver, Sister Betty [Mayhan 00:00:57], who
took such loving care of my mother. Praise Song for the Caregiver. Praise song for Sister Betty [Mayhan
00:01:08].

Mama Linda Goss (01:09): Sister Betty carries the whole race of her people on her hip. Legend has it,
that as a baby, Sister Betty leaked from her mama's womb and nursed her back to health. When the
steel-driving man, John Henry, was a crying baby, Sister Betty, put him on her knee and cradled him to
sleep. Sister Betty's back is broad like a lioness. Her legs are sturdy like a mama bear. Her body is tall and
long like a black walnut tree. Sister Betty got more arms than an octopus. She can cornrow [Kesha's
00:01:51] hair, helm Jerome's pants, iron clothes, water the plants, read the newspaper to [Nana
00:01:57], talk on the phone to [Sally Bell 00:01:59], shuck corn, and watch [Carol's 00:02:01] kids all at
the same time. Sister Betty is faithful to her church. She's got a pretty sounding voice. She sings in the
choir.

Mama Linda Goss (02:38): (singing)

Mama Linda Goss (02:40): Oh, she's a good cook. She manages the church kitchen. She is a Sunday
school teacher. Sister Betty goes to prayer meeting every week. She takes food to the sick and shut-in.
She takes folks to the grocery store and yet sister Betty is able to watch her TV shows and play her
numbers. Sister Betty has raised her children, helped raise her grandchildren, her great grandchildren,
and a lot of other folks' children. She took care of my mama and just about everybody else's mama and
father who have been in need of care in this neighborhood. Sister Betty is the caregiver of her people.
Even though she got rheumatism in her knees and arthritis in her shoulders, yet she still carries the race
of her people on her hip.

Mama Linda Goss (03:30): Fast-forward. Sister Betty got cancer in her hip y'all. She can't take care of
folks like she used to. She told me, "Oh, how I wish the Lord would just let me get up out of this bed so I
could take care of somebody." Her favorite song is Stand By Me. Now, Sister Betty has stood by her
community. And now the community is standing by her years later.

Mama Linda Goss (04:16): I've talked to Sister Betty the other day. I called and wished her a blessed
birthday. She said to me, "Linda, I'm in here cooking. My pot roast is ready. I'm working on the chicken
salad and the tuna salad. And my sweet potato pie is in the oven and the collards on the stove. Child, I'm
10 years out of being diagnosed and taking all them treatments. The Lord still got me here." Lord, what
are we going to do without the Sister Bettys of this world? You don't make them like you used to. How
come, Lord? How come? Sister Betty, we love you. We thank you for you have carried our people on
your hip. [Singing]