

The Peale, Baltimore

Out of the Blocks Storytelling Series

Recorded by Aaron Henkin; Photographs and Music by Wendel Patrick

Produced for the *Out of the Blocks* website, created by the Peale, <https://ootb.thepeale.org/>

Out of the Blocks is supported by PRX and produced with grant funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cohen Opportunity Fund, The Hoffberger Foundation, Patricia and Mark Joseph, The Shelter Foundation, The Kenneth S Battye Charitable Trust, The Sana and Andy Brooks Family Fund, The Muse Web Foundation, and the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund, creator of the Baker Artist Portfolios



Joyce Smith ([00:03](#)):

Soul Sauce, can I help you? Joyce Smith, 2101 Emerson Avenue. Soul Sauce Restaurant.

Speaker 3 ([00:12](#)):

Turkey, bacon, cheese, egg, and home fries.

Speaker 4 ([00:12](#)):

T-bone steak, home fries with cheese eggs.

Speaker 5 ([00:12](#)):

Four eggs over medium.

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Speaker 6 ([00:12](#)):

Chick B.

Joyce Smith ([00:12](#)):

Anything else?

Speaker 4 ([00:13](#)):

Cheese on everything.

Joyce Smith ([00:20](#)):

I came from Trinidad and Tobago. I ended up in Baltimore, Maryland, and this is where I've been since. Seven days a week for 30 years now. I get so much love from the customers in here it's better than where I came from. They had no love in them.

Speaker 7 ([00:40](#)):

So you came here. You had a husband who was here, but he didn't stay?

Joyce Smith ([00:45](#)):

He got deported because he didn't want to do right. So they sent him back, and I stayed back with my four children, and I raised them from working in this breakfast spot for 30 years.

Speaker 7 ([00:58](#)):

What do you think has been the happiest moment of your life?

Joyce Smith ([01:04](#)):

When my children's father got deported. It is. It was. Because he was abusive. I was glad when they sent him back. And he tried for me to come back, and I told him, no, this is my chance now. I'm going to do me.

Jamilia ([01:23](#)):

My name is Jamilia, and my relation to Joyce is, she's my mother. Just watching a black woman come up, handling everything merely on her own. I guess it was just embedded in me.

Speaker 7 ([01:37](#)):

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Joyce, what do you think? What do you hope your daughter has learned from watching you and learning from you and the way you've lived your life?

Joyce Smith ([01:44](#)):

That she could be just like me. Don't depend on nobody for nothing. Get up and get your own. You know? Hey, come say something about Soul Sauce, we're going on the radio.

Speaker 9 ([01:56](#)):

Joyce is a nice person, but she get nasty sometimes. Don't make her mad. Don't make her mad. You make her mad, I don't know. She go crazy on you.

Speaker 10 ([02:04](#)):

She ain't going to lie to you. She going to tell you straight up. She's like a mother figure and a grandmother figure mixed in one.

Joyce Smith ([02:10](#)):

Most of the customers been coming here since they was kids going to school. And now they grown men and women, that still comes in here. So every day you see the same people.

Speaker 11 ([02:23](#)):

Yeah. When she first came here, I was here. She watched a lot of us grow up.

Joyce Smith ([02:28](#)):

Come on. Ask him when he's going to pay his bill.

Speaker 7 ([02:31](#)):

Joyce wants to know when are you going to pay your bill.

Speaker 12 ([02:34](#)):

Never, never. [crosstalk 00:02:38]