

Drop D

The Caregivers

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D G D G
We came here from Africa, Mexico, Chile
D G D A
India, Ireland, Sweden and Spain
D A D G
We came here alone or we came with our families
D A
Some of us made the long journey in chains
A D
Some of us came here with hope for our children
A D A
We came, tho' the laws welcomed none of our kind
D G D G
We came for strong hands and cheap wages were needed
D G D A D
And those who employed us did not seem to mind
D A G D
We are the women who've cared for the children
D A G A
The children of privilege in elegant homes
D A
We give them our love, all we ask is our freedom
G A
And wages enough to take care of our own

D G D G
What can we do when no laws will protect us?
D G A
When questions are asked, tell us, where can we run?
D G D G
If we're caught, those who hire us are slapped on the wrist-
D A
But we're sent back to poverty, hunger and guns

A D
 We do love these children, we raise them in kindness
 A D
 They're dressed in their finest for school every morn
 D G D G
 We sweeten their chocolate with almond and honey
 D G D A D
 But bitter the lives of the children we've born CHORUS

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 We give them our love, all we ask is our freedom
 G A
 And wages enough to take care of our own
 D G D G
 So hush now my baby, your mama is near you
 D A
 Hush now and dream of a world sweet and kind
 D G D G
 Where morning will bring you a cup of sweet cocoa
 D A
 And mama won't have to be gone all the time
 Dm C Dm C Dm
 Hush a bye, don't you cry. Go to sleep, you little baby
 Dm C Dm C Dm
 When you wake, you will see all the pretty little horses.

I wrote this song in 1993. The General public raised an outcry about President Clinton's nomination for attorney-general, Zoe Baird, because she had hired an illegal nanny (for under minimum wage.) Baird's nomination was withdrawn. But while Baird paid her fine and returned to her corporate career, Lillian Cordero, the nanny, was returned to Peru along with her husband to an uncertain future.

I think now of how many immigrants are facing the same unjust working conditions, uncertainty and fear as they try to make lives for themselves in this country built on the backs of immigrants

At the end of the song, I inserted “All the Pretty Little Horses”...a traditional African-American lullaby thought to go back to slavery times, when slave women had to leave their own children in the fields while they went to the “big house” to care for the children of the owners.