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CONTACT: Shelby Janner (512) 638-6379

Black Women Share Their Truth in New Chicken Soup for the Soul Collection

12 Powerful Poems and 101 Inspiring Stories about Love, Courage, Hope and Reality

COS COB, Conn. – Black women are speaking and the world is listening. A new collection of stories and poems from Chicken Soup for the Soul introduces readers to more than 100 Black female writers sharing their truth about everyday life and milestone moments. Their stories and poems are honest and courageous, sometimes funny and sometimes serious, and all very relevant to what’s going on today. *Chicken Soup for the Soul: I’m Speaking Now* (June 1, 2021, 978-1-611590838, \$14.95) is coauthored by Chicken Soup for the Soul editor-in-chief Amy Newmark and Breena Clarke, the award-winning novelist whose works include *Stand the Storm*, *Angels Make Their Hope Here*, and Oprah’s Book Club pick *River, Cross My Heart*.

“We are speaking now,” says Breena Clarke in her introduction to the book. “Now, because the moment is now, in this collection of 101 first-person narratives and twelve poems is an opportunity to hear the often silenced voices of Black women. The stories are straightforward accounts of daily lives. Some are bursts of bright recollection of events or incidents from the past that have stamped the authors’ lives. Some of the stories are sweet, tender remembrances, evoking pictures of beloved forebears who give us the gritty lessons for survival. Some of the narratives are of dreams and goals the authors set for themselves and their children, juxtaposed with fears and trepidation. Some of these stories are raw, unsettling accounts of trauma.”

These 101 stories and 12 poems, written by and for Black women, cover it all—from fierce to funny—about hopes and dreams, fears and realities, identity and self-discovery, family, children, even hair. Each one is headed by a quote from a wellspring of wisdom from historical and contemporary Black women. The stories are sorted into chapters, each starting with a relevant poem, and covering the gamut of the Black experience in the US, Canada, and the Caribbean.

Women will nod their heads in recognition as they read about hair styles and going natural, family traditions and soul food, sisters and friends, and loving Black men, with the attendant fear for them in a society that endangers them when they even go for a drive. There are stories about living with systemic racism, overcoming challenges, and achieving excellence. Women share their trips abroad, including to Africa, and their trips back to where their ancestors were enslaved and their grandmas and great-grandmas grew up, picking cotton and working domestic jobs. They talk about self-care and self-discovery, and how they’ve learned to stand up and speak out for themselves and their families.

An extraordinary number of these writers have advanced degrees and professional careers, and they share the hard work that got them to where they are today. These stories and poems are inspirational and moving, with life lessons that have been hard-won. Everyone will benefit from this look into the culture, wisdom, and everyday reality of the Black experience, told through the eyes of more than 100 Black women who are speaking now, to us.

ABOUT CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL

Chicken Soup for the Soul publishes the famous *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book series. With well over 100 million books sold to date in the U.S. and Canada, more than 250 titles, and translations into more than 40 languages, the phrase “chicken soup for the soul” is known worldwide and is regularly referenced in pop culture. Today, 28 years after it first began sharing happiness, inspiration and hope through its books, this socially conscious company continues to publish a new title a month. It has also evolved beyond the bookstore, with a podcast, education programs, dog and cat food, licensed products, and video, television and movies through its subsidiary, Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment.

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For a review copy of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: I’m Speaking Now* or an interview with Breena Clarke or one of the contributors, contact Shelby Janner at (512) 638-6379 or shelby@zilkermmedia.com.