Some like to think
they’re too tough to die

Tried  Tested  Found true

Some are tough enough to live
for each other

Tough enough to make
the Great Migration  for the warmth of other suns

The Best of My Love soundtracks the park
where a woman shares
her first meal with a stranger

Tough enough to survive deadly disease &
Jim Crow on the Avenue

She gets tired of being told
the streets
are
falling
apart
& connects the kids together

Tough enough to know that
this future woman  or that future man
is always paying attention

Some are tough enough to never leave
& build upon a rock
a place for food for play a place to get it together

Those Charming Young Ladies & those college kids &
that congressman &
those old Busy B’s can’t forget that smile

She’s tough enough to give
the best of her love
& that is just too tough to die

Dorothy Allen is the daughter of West Indian and African American parents and was born and raised in South Philadelphia. She is the founder of the Barrett Educational Center in Point Breeze and has worked to provide food, social services, job training and a safe haven for children and teens in the neighborhood.