

Ring, Ring, Ring

by Ginnah Howard

You have reached 456-7222. If this is an emergency, hang up and dial 911. If this is trouble, please call someone else. You cannot count on me; I am not here for you. The news I have is good: you have a place to live; you have been befriended by someone steady. I'm holding onto that. If this is not you, leave a message. I am standing by the phone, praying, an alarm going off in my chest. If it isn't your voice, I'll answer. Whoever it is that isn't you, be prepared for the gust of relief when I say Hello.

