Elizabeth Cotten – Shake Sugaree (1967)

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1. Shake Sugaree 2. Take Me Back to Baltimore 3. Washington Blues 4. I'm Going Away 5. Fox Chase 6. Ontario Blues 7. Fare You Well, My Darling 8. Medley 9. Mama, Nobody's Here But the Baby 10. Mama, Nobody's Here But the Baby 11. Look and Live, My Brother 12. Jesus Lifted Me 13. Jesus Is Tenderly Calling <u>play</u> 14. Buck Dance 15. Ruben 16. Oh, Miss Lulie Gal 17. Can't Get a Letter From Down the Road 18. Shoot That Buffalo 19. <u>play</u> 20. Hallelujah, It Is Done 21. Holy Ghost, Unchain My Name 22. Little Brown Jug 23. Della 24. Ball the Jack 25. Till We Meet Again 26. When the Train Comes Along Elizabeth Cotten (vocals, acoustic guitar); Brenda Evans (vocals).

"Age ain't nothing but a number," so sang the late Aaliyah. Less overtly, so did North Carolinian Elizabeth Cotton. Born in 1895, she learned to play guitar by sneaking into her brother's room to practice while he was away. With her ear, she could play a song after hearing it once, and learned all the songs of the Carolina hills. At age 11, she wrote a little tune called "Freight Train." At 12, she started working as a housecleaner for folks, and with marital and church duties calling, put away the guitar for some 25 years.

She wound up recording her tune "Freight Train" in 1958, where it instantly ascended into the upper echelons of American folk (it even became a hit in the UK!), as if it had been around since the turn of the century. Having never been heard outside of her family parlor before, Cotton was now at the forefront of the blues revival, performing alongside other forgotten recording artists like "Mississippi" John Hurt, Skip James and Sleepy John Estes. Other songs she recollected from her early days in North Carolina and recorded became the foundation of folk for a whole new generation of players. Everyone from Taj Mahal to Delaney and Bonnie, from Bob Dylan to the Grateful Dead, covered her songs, and they are now part of the American songbook.

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Cotten was declared a National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment for the Arts in 1984, and was recognized by the Smithsonian Institution as a "living treasure." She received a Grammy Award in 1985 when she was 90. These essential 1965-66 recordings include ten previously unreleased tracks. 26 tracks. 60 minutes. Reissued from Folkways 31003.

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