



A Woman Like Me: A Memoir

Bettye LaVette, David Ritz

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Acclaimed R&B singer Bettye LaVette celebrates her storied career in show business with her stunning memoir, *A Woman Like Me*, and her new album, *Thankful N' Thoughtful*.

As a teenager in Detroit, Bettye LaVette had a hit single with “My Man—He’s a Lovin’ Man.” By the time she was twenty, she had faded back into obscurity and was barely surviving in New York City. For the next forty years, despite being associated with legends such as Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye, and James Brown, she remained relatively unknown outside a circle of devoted fans. Every time it seemed that her dream of stepping into the spotlight was finally coming true, bad luck smashed her hopes, again and again. Then, after a lifetime of singing in clubs and lounges, her unforgettable televised performances at the 2008 Kennedy Center Honors and at President Obama’s pre-Inaugural Concert at the Lincoln Memorial in 2009 won her the recognition she had sought for her entire life.

Bettye LaVette’s career has been a one-of-a-kind roller-coaster ride through the world of music; it has taken her from the peaks to the pits and back. In this unflinchingly honest memoir, she boldly recounts her freewheeling childhood—her parents ran an illegal liquor business out of their living room, which was frequented by some of the top acts of the forties and fifties—her short-lived conquest of the R&B world in the 1960s, her decline into poverty and despair, and her recent comeback and career revival, with two Grammy-nominated CDs and numerous appearances on major television talk shows. Poignant, brazen, and fearless, *A Woman Like Me* is a tour de force from one of the most outspoken female performers singing today—and she’s a force to be reckoned with.

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