



# Bobby Womack: My Story 1944 - 2014

*Bobby Womack, Robert Ashton*

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**Honest, insightful, and unflinching, this is the authentic voice of the Midnight Mover, a hard-working and prolific legend in the music business who stood shoulder to shoulder with Ray Charles, James Brown, and Marvin Gaye as a true giant of soul, R&B, and blues music**

Bobby Womack was a true legend, a phenomenally gifted musician with 40 albums and 30 million record sales to his name. The success of his songs helped him to escape the ghetto and become a star, but battles with the record industry and hard drugs almost wiped him out. From his poor childhood growing up in Cleveland and his early forays into music with his four brothers in the 1950s, Womack tells how he found success with his family gospel group The Valentinos. He describes his act being whipped into shape by James Brown, life on the "chitlin' circuit" with Jimi Hendrix, being on the road with the likes of Sam Cooke and Wilson Pickett, and recording in the studio with Eric Clapton and Elvis Presley. But success came at a price. His personal life was never far from heartache and pain. Womack lost his friend and mentor Sam Cooke when the soul star was gunned down in a motel. He incurred the wrath of many when, at the age of just 21, he married Cooke's widow Barbara. His escape from the criticism was to turn to drugs and his friend Sly Stone, leading him to spend years as one of the biggest party animals in Los Angeles. The years of riotous abuse took its toll on Womack and those closest to him, including Janis Joplin, who spent her last night drinking with the singer. His marriage to Barbara broke up, his brother Harry was brutally murdered, and he lost two sons. But Womack's talent, searing guitar, and soulful voice always shone through. Womack is cited as an influence by myriad musicians, and remains the epitome of cool.

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