



Glow: The Autobiography of Rick James

Rick James

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Best known for his song “Super Freak,” hitmaker, singer, innovator, producer, award-winning pioneer in the fusion of funk groove and rock, the late Rick James collaborated with music biographer David Ritz in this posthumously published, wildly entertaining, and profound expression of a rock star’s life and soul.

He was the nephew of Temptations singer Melvin Franklin; a boy who watched and listened, mesmerized from underneath cocktail tables at the shows of Etta James and Miles Davis. He was a vagrant hippie who wandered to Toronto, where he ended up playing with Neil Young and Joni Mitchell, and he became a household name in the 1980s with his hit song “Super Freak.” Later in life, he was a bad boy who got caught up in drug smuggling and ended up in prison. But since his passing in August 2004, Rick James has remained a legendary icon whose name is nearly synonymous with funk music—and who popularized the genre, creating a lasting influence on pop artists from Prince to Jay-Z to Snoop Dogg, among countless others.

In *Glow*, Rick James and acclaimed music biographer David Ritz collaborated to write a no-holds-barred memoir about the boy and the man who became a music superstar in America’s disco age. It tells of James’s upbringing and how his mother introduced him to musical geniuses of the time. And it reveals details on many universally revered artists, from Marvin Gaye and Prince to Nash, Teena Marie, and Berry Gordy. James himself said, “My journey has taken me through hell and back. It’s all in my music—the parties, the pain, the oversized ego, the insane obsessions.” But despite his bad boy behavior, James was a tremendous talent and a unique, unforgettable human being. His “glow” was an overriding quality that one of his mentors saw in him—and one that will stay with this legendary figure who left an indelible mark on American popular music.

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June Ortiz:

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