



The Promise (Autobiography)

Hal Bynum

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Hal Bynum's first book, entitled *The Promise*, breaks new ground for him. Along with the lyrics to Bynum's well known songs from all three of his albums, the book also carries a series of autobiographical short stories about Hal's life growing up in rural west Texas, and his experiences in the Nashville music business in later years.

Here Bynum reveals sides of himself we haven't seen before. Ambitious and alcoholic, driven and self-destructive, caring and callous, Bynum is scathing in his self-honesty. When this honesty is then turned on the music business itself, there are even more surprises. You'll see first hand how record companies pressure their recording artists in "Ray Price, 1972," and how petty personal pride can undermine the fate of a song, a record and even a recording artist in "Chains, Chains, Shackles and Chains." You'll go back stage with Hal as an insecure young songwriter visiting with Buddy Holly, Jim Reeves, Ferlin Husky and Johnny Cash, in "Fair Park Auditorium, 1956," or meet a young Willie Nelson in "St. Louis, 1977 - Ft. Worth, 1954."

One can interpret the title *The Promise* on many levels. Does it refer to the young writer's promising future, the promise of country music itself, or is it the promise of salvation that somehow comes through when the chaos of Bynum's early years is juxtaposed against the wisdom of his later life? We're left to ponder this and many questions as we come to the end of this book, and like the CD, we journey with the poet, and "wonder how many seasons (we) have left."

Over the last few years, Bynum's spoken word recordings have found a deep and loyal following in America and the world beyond, as more and more thoughtful people discover his profound and unique style of self-expression: his art. Is it country? Yes, but it's also much, much more.

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