



No Woman No Cry: My Life With Bob Marley

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A memoir by the woman who knew Bob Marley best--his wife, Rita.

Rita Marley grew up in the slums of Trench Town, Jamaica. Abandoned by her mother at a very young age, she was raised by her aunt. Music ran in Rita's family, and even as a child her talent for singing was pronounced. By the age of 18, Rita was an unwed mother, and it was then that she met Bob Marley at a recording studio in Trench Town. Bob and Rita became close friends, fell in love, and soon, she and her girlfriends were singing backup for the Wailers. At the ages of 21 and 19, Bob and Rita were married.

The rest is history: Bob Marley and the Wailers set Jamaica and the world on fire. But while Rita displayed blazing courage, joy, and an indisputable devotion to her husband, life with Bob was not easy. There were his liaisons with other women--some of which produced children and were conducted under Rita's roof. The press repeatedly reported that Bob was unmarried to preserve his "image." But Rita kept her self-respect, and when Bob succumbed to cancer in 1981, she was at his side. In the years that followed, she became a force in her own right--as the Bob Marley Foundation's spokesperson and a performer in her reggae group, the I-Three.

Written with author Hettie Jones, *No Woman No Cry* is a no-holds-barred account of life with one of the most famous musicians of all time. In *No Woman No Cry*, readers will learn about the never-before-told details of Bob Marley's life, including:

How Rita practiced subsistence farming when first married to Bob to have food for her family.

How Rita rode her bicycle into town with copies of Bob's latest songs to sell.

How Rita worked as a housekeeper in Delaware to help support her family when her children were young.

Why Rita chose to befriend some of the women with whom Bob had affairs and to give them advice on rearing the children they had with Bob.

The story of the attack on Bob which almost killed the two of them.

Bob's last wishes, dreams, and hopes, as well as the details of his death, such as who came to the funeral (and who didn't).

No Woman No Cry: My Life With Bob Marley Details

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From Reader Review No Woman No Cry: My Life With Bob Marley for online ebook

Alicia says

Life can be tough, but perseverance and loved ones make it worthwhile

Zanele says

Picking up this particular book, I really wanted to experience Bob Marley the legend...big mistake! All I got was Bob Marley the ordinary man. The fact that he beat his wife just descended him from the pedestal that I put him on. I guess he was human like the rest of us after all. The rest of the book was enjoyable..reading about humble beginnings that resonate with my township upbringing made the story even more real. I have a new found respect for Rita because of all she endured and this somehow de-mystified her. (I had always wondered what Bob saw in her in the first place and the story reveals this, which is great!)

Missy J says

Wow I read this within 24 hours, on a very bleak, foggy and cold Sunday. The prose of this book is straightforward and as a Bob Marley fan, I was already familiar with his life story due to the many documentaries I have watched. I remember the first time I found out that Bob Marley had so many children by different women and that his first and only wife Rita Marley stayed with him until his death, I wondered how did she do that?

Well, she gives you the answer in this book. I thought this biography was very well written and Rita Marley was truthful in her account of what she went through. She was abandoned by her mother, and raised primarily by her father's sister. Her father was a musician, so Rita was always musically inclined. Interestingly, her relationship with Bob started out because she pitied him - for not having a mother (Bob's mother migrated to Delaware when he was young, and he was left with his stepfather and his new wife).

Their relationship wasn't just romantic, but also had a sisterly-brotherly vibe to it. She wanted to care for Bob and provide him guidance when needed. Unfortunately, Bob never realized that his womanizing and one night stands with other women was unfair and hurtful to Rita. She shows us the vulnerable Bob, the Bob who is being treated like a "boy" by Rita's aunty and the weaknesses he had.

One thing I enjoyed about this biography is that Rita has an amazing capacity to view life as a whole and to give credit where credit's due. She is very grateful for her aunty raising her and providing plenty of guidance. She is grateful to each and every friend that supported her during the tough times. She also has the ability to assess her own situation in a clear way. For Rita, the childrens' well being was always top priority, which is why she was adamant to move out of Trench Town as soon as possible and she even took in and raised the children Bob fathered with other women. Next, she was supportive of Bob's music dream even if it meant that he would have affairs with other women and would leave her alone while he toured.

Rita also reveals to us that on top of Bob's womanizing, she also had to find herself - who is Rita? Who is

this woman whose husband skyrocketed to fame? What does she really want out of life? What does she value exactly and what means the most to her. I think she did a very well job in keeping her head level, especially after Bob's death and when the legal drama began. She is guided by her faith in Rastafari and Jah, and by her own intuition of what's right for her family.

2017 Jamaica Challenge #6: The National Tree of Jamaica is.....

(from Jamaica Information Service) **The Blue Mahoe (Hibiscus Elatus)! It is indigenous to the island and grows quite rapidly, often attaining 20m (66ft) or more in height.**

*If you are the big tree
We are the small axe
Sharpened to cut you down (well sharp)
Ready to cut you down*
- Bob Marley, "Small Axe"

Michael Martin says

This book was very appealing to me, particularly because it has so much to do with my culture. Reggae happens to be my favorite genre of music, so this book was a "goodread" for me. This book was very touching and emotional at parts because it talked about how Bob Marley used to sleep on the ground of a studio at night and how his wife, Rita Marley, washed his one pair of underwear for him to wear day in and day out. No one had expected Bob to become known all over the world. He broke their expectations greatly. In fact, his music was so popular internationally that people "bootlegged" his work. They sold illegal copies of his music to people. He was the first person ever to start a peace concert, and a concert for relief. His concert was called the "One Love: World Peace Concert". Through his songs and various performances, he hoped to instill in people that world peace can be achieved if everyone only works together and if they stop rushing and just slow down to inhale the sweet smell of life.

Sadly, this great hero died. His widow, renowned artist Rita Marley, who was also a backup singer in his band, Bob Marley and The Wailers, and lead singer in her own group, I-Three, continued his legacy by establishing a museum in honor of him. The museum is called the Bob Marley Museum and it is located at his house- his house, is now open to public viewing and everything he ever owned, all priceless, can be admired by his fans. I would recommend this powerful book to anyone who takes an interest in great musical heroes or Reggae greats, or even just an interest in various types of music at all. James Haskins

Phyllis says

Rita Marley wrote this book about her early life and her life with Bob Marley. She was born in Cuba but soon moved to Jamaica. She was abandoned by her mother at age five and raised by her father until the age of thirteen when he left for England. At that she moved in with an aunt. It's about growing up in a rough neighborhood and making the best of it. She sang backup to Bob Marley and The Wailers and music was

always a huge part of their lives. She raised their children and two from other women that Bob was involved with. He died in 1981 from cancer but she has continued her own singing career.

"As for me, it's not just about being his wife, it's about being a person who is carrying on a legacy that means so much to the world. Because not only do people my age remain interested, but newer generations, a third and fourth generation, all come loving his message and still wearing T-shirts and singing his songs at concerts"

DARCINA says

I truly love this book....I love Bob and Rita Marley equally...The love that this woman had for this Man and the connection that they had throughout their careers and relationship is amazing...Sometimes i questioned how did she do it? The older i get I realized she did it with Love....Great Book...

Zornitsa Tomova says

A beautiful book with so much strength and determination coming out of every page, grounding and inspiring at the same time. Rita has been through so much and yet managed to keep herself going, doing good for others, loving with her whole heart. From being abandoned by her mother to a life of poverty and teen motherhood of her own, through sharing Bob Marley's crazy ride to fame and getting shot in the head, to her dedication to her huge extended family (incl. Bob's many women, kids and grandchildren) and helping black kids and women in Jamaica and Africa. No woman, no cry - just amazing superwoman Rita :)

Madison says

A beautifu, heartbreaking story of Bob Marley's inspiration, his rock, his wife, Rita Marley. Her story is profoundly inspirational, and while it paints Bob in a light that is less than heroic, it is Rita's faithfulness that is the heart of this story. She held her family together against what seems like impossible odds, and her strength amidst heartbreak is what makes this book one of the best books I've ever read.

Nakia says

This book was very eye opening regarding the choices in love that Bob Marley made throughout his life. Rita meets Bob as a teenaged mother working on her nursing career who also likes to sing. They fall in love after spending countless hours in the studio before Bob becomes a success. Living together in Trench Town, in a small shack, with little to eat, the couple struggle to spread Bob's music while creating a family together. Rita makes do, while Bob sings. And then babies enter the picture, along with other women and record companies intent on making a profit from Bob's message.

This is the story of how Rita dealt with Bob's love, success, infidelity, and family; traveling all over the world, being labelled his "sister", caring for his children by other women, singing in the background, and handling his death.

I loved the book because it gave me insight into a powerful icon in music that I know little about, but I found myself wanting more, and wishing there was more info given about how his music developed and how he morphed into a Jamaican hero and reggae superstar. Rita wrote this book as if she were holding a conversation, which led to many holes in her story throughout the book. I was left wanting to know Bob's side of the story, and more about his life and struggles.

"No Woman, No Cry" made for a great discussion within my book club, since Bob's infidelity was a central theme of the book, and it was also a nice introduction to Bob's life, but for a more in depth look, I'd suggest something that focuses more on his career in the music business.

Evan says

this book really shows that you can leave the slums and make it as a hugely world know artist. it is a really inspiring book. this book was written by bob marley's wife and it really shows her life with bob marley. its nice to read a story from another person in his family's perspective. he had many affairs with other women that he did not hide from her and she still stuck with him. i think that shows the love between them was very strong. growing up in trenchtown jamaica, the town with drugs, gangs, prostitution and many more things. this story shows the tough and hard times in their childhood, and in their marriage they had hundreds of fights. this is probably one of the most amazing books i have read, and one of the most powerful books i have read

Ninette says

I picked the book up with expectations of purely reading about Bob's fame. I am really really happy that the book was not all about the rise but also the falls (of which there were many) it gave me deeper insight into the Marley's life in the years which I personally think mattered the most, the years that helped shape the legend that is Bob Marley but also his equally hardworking lady Rita Marley, a great read!

Kim says

To fulfil my recent Bob Marley obsession, I decided to read the only book I knew I could trust. I am so amazed that through all of Marley's infidelities and womanizing ways, his loyal wife, Rita, stuck by his side, along with their five children. She even took part in raising the children (which include Damian) he had out of wedlock with other women. It was terrible the way he developed melanoma. Just a little advice: if you injure your big toe, PLEASE get it looked at.

This was a great and insightful read for any Marley fan, big or small.

Kp says

It was interesting to read about Rita and Bob Marley's early life in Jamaica, and I enjoyed reading this book. Overall I didn't think it was very well written, and that was especially true in the last half, after Bob died. I

think the book needed a lot more editing and flushing out. She talked a lot about Bob's beliefs and the Rastafarian religion, but she never really said what they were. Sorry, but I don't really know that much about Bob Marley, so I was a little interested in that. There were a few sentences about equality, etc, and I do know some of his words, but I just thought she could have woven that in better.

She was /is a strong woman, and I like that. She put up with so much from him in the way of womanizing. It was amazing to me the way she could rationalize it - and that HE rationalized it. "Oh, this woman is having my baby so that you don't have to have so many and can go on singing," or some such bull. But basically I liked the way she was able to deal with it and still live her life and go on. That was amazing to me. It was also interesting to think of the last famous musician's bio I read of Keith Richards. It follows the "get famous, get women" life path.

Jessica says

My Curled Up Review: Rita Marley's new book about her life married to and collaborating with reggae musician Bob Marley is the poster book for the great old cliché "behind every successful man is a woman." Of course, in Ms. Marley's case, she is not just the woman behind his success but also the woman willing to have and raise his children, promote his career, and look the other way when Bob was blatantly engaging in extra-marital affairs.

Rita's story begins when she is just a child being raised by her Aunty in Trench Town, Kingston, Jamaica, and quickly moves through to her teenage years when she bears her first daughter and meets Bob (then known as Robbie), who is working at a local studio with Peter Tosh and Neville "Bunny" Livingston under the group name Wailing Wailers. Loving music herself, Rita puts herself in their path, literally, and soon strikes up friendships and singing connections. Soon after, she and Bob are married and alternate between living with Rita's Aunty, traveling to the United States, and returning to Bob's childhood home, St. Ann's (where Rita describes her happiest memories of their time together, despite the provincial style of living).

After meeting Chris Blackwell of Island Records, who supports and promotes Bob's work monetarily, Rita begins to be pushed out of the picture as a parade of women come through Bob's new digs at Island House in Jamaica. Rita decides to move to Bell Bay and make a home of her own. While Rita is hurting from Bob's affairs, she does not turn Bob away when he visits and feels that he is committed to taking care of his family despite his lack of presence. Rita even agrees to "adopt" children that Bob has had with other women and eventually raises a family of eight children while continuing to pursue a singing career, running a juice bar, traveling, and farming organically.

Rita's commitment to her husband and her children is impressive and commendable, although it is a bit tiresome in the guise of a biography/memoir. While Rita is not "preachy", the reader is given the impression that the book is a kind of forum for life philosophies rather than a remembrance. Many of Rita's specific flashbacks seem to be a means to explain (or perhaps rationalize) a lifestyle rather than a desire to share the actual memory.

Rita makes the memoir her own by talking about her life after Bob's death in 1981, when he was only 35 and Rita only 31. She writes of her continued struggles to provide for her family, launch a solo career as well as the careers of some of her children, find a partner to share her life with, and about her joy at finally reaching Africa - specifically Ghana - and her commitment to making a better life for those who live there.

It is clear that Rita Marley has a big heart and is an exceptional woman. She was forced to learn many tough lessons as a very young woman and did not let that keep her from seeing the goodness in humanity and spreading that joy herself. Her conversationally written memoir is entertaining and uplifting and sure to be of interest to any fan of the Marley family.

Aaminah Shakur says

one of the most powerful books i've ever read. i am, of course, a huge Bob Marley fan, but i think Rita did an excellent job of providing a balanced realistic portrayal of him. she also writes very candidly about her struggles, essentially raising their children alone while he worked and was pulled in directions he didn't mean to go. also Rita writes of struggling with his relationships with hangers-on, including other women, and raising children from those relationships. a musician, singer and entrepreneur in her own right, as well as a deeply spiritual woman, Rita's story is inspiring and meaningful for struggling women of color.
