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DELTA LADY:
A Memoir
By Rita Coolidge

“Lyrical.... Exhibits a deep understanding of human nature....Authentic and intimate.”
— Publishers Weekly

Rita Coolidge’s soulful voice contributed unforgettably to the soundtrack of a generation. Her talent, beauty, and authenticity inspired many of her contemporaries and some even immortalized her in songs. With her then-husband Kris Kristofferson, she formed one of pop culture’s hottest supercouples on and off the stage. Now this Grammy Award winner opens up about her path from Tennessee to stardom in **DELTA LADY: A Memoir (Harper; On Sale: April 5, 2016; \$25.99; Hardcover)**, a candid chronicle of her life and career in and out of the spotlight written with bestselling author Michael Walker.

Although she has spent decades in the public eye, at last this consummate entertainer tells her own story, one blessed with fame and fortune but also touched by pain and loss. Best known for “(Your Love Keeps Lifting Me) Higher and Higher”—her anthem which she closes her shows with to this day—and “We’re All Alone,” Coolidge got her start singing backup on everything from Stephen Stills’ “Love the One You’re With” to Eric Clapton’s “After Midnight” to Ray Charles’s “Busted.” After landing a solo deal, she recorded several albums before *Anytime ... Anywhere* skyrocketed up the charts in 1977 and cemented her celebrity and status as one of pop and rock’s most distinctive female singers.

Coolidge, who could sing before she could talk, credits her success to the values instilled in her early on by her preacher father and her teacher mother, and the rich heritage of their Cherokee lineage. Along with her siblings she was raised to believe that with her faith to guide her, anything was possible. A brush with death when she was a teen only solidified her strength and resolve. These qualities would serve her well when after graduating from college she immersed herself in the heady Memphis music scene of the late ‘60s before heading to California, where she became one of Los Angeles’ most sought- after background singers.

A vital presence at the epicenter of L.A.’s music scene in the 1970s, Coolidge socialized and collaborated with a who’s who of the industry’s elite. **DELTA LADY** reveals riveting behind-the-scenes details including:

Coolidge's relationships with producer Leon Russell, who penned "Delta Lady" in her honor; with Stephen Stills and Graham Nash, which David Crosby claimed led to the band's demise; and with top session drummer Jim Gordon, a golden boy later convicted of murder; her two months on the road with the Mad Dogs & Englishmen, the now legendary rock-and-roll circus starring Joe Cocker and a cast of fellow up-and-comers; and her uncredited but essential contribution to the classic "Layla."

At the heart of her intimate account is her intensely passionate, all-consuming romance with Kris Kristofferson, with whom she shared a great if tempestuous love for eight years. When they met, she knew they were destined to be a couple. With him, Coolidge experienced the highest of highs and suffered the lowest of lows. They wrote together, toured together, won awards together, and had a daughter together, but ultimately their marriage did not survive.

"As you get older you gather layers and layers and layers of life," Coolidge reflects in **DELTA LADY**, "And you learn to wear them and carry them proudly, or you let them take you down. And I choose to wear mine." Hitting grace notes every step of the way, Rita Coolidge looks back with hard-earned equanimity, having survived adversity and persevered in a notoriously fickle business with her faith and integrity intact. Its honesty, eloquence, and insight make **DELTA LADY** essential reading not only for Coolidge's admirers but for anyone interested in an insider's take on an enduring chapter in rock history—and the inspiring story of an uncompromising woman's pursuit of her dream.

About the Authors:

Rita Coolidge is a two-time Grammy Award winner. She began her music career in Memphis before moving to Los Angeles, where she became one of the most popular backup singers in the business, recording with Leon Russell, Joe Cocker, Eric Clapton, Stephen Stills, and other artists. Signed to A&M Records as a solo artist in 1971, she released more than two dozen albums in the years that followed, including the multiplatinum *Anytime... Anywhere*, and continues to record and tour. She lives in Fallbrook, California.

Michael Walker is the bestselling author of *Laurel Canyon: The Inside Story of Rock-and-Roll's Legendary Neighborhood* and *What You Want Is in the Limo: On the Road with Led Zeppelin, Alice Cooper, and the Who in 1973*. He has written about popular culture for the *New York Times* and is a contributing editor at the *Hollywood Reporter*. He lives in Los Angeles.

DELTA LADY:

A Memoir

By Rita Coolidge with Michael Walker

Harper

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