

# Mp3 Gary King - Songs From The Black Book

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Gary King's soulful voice and classic songwriting are a throwback. Think Stevie Wonder and Sting. The songs are contemporary yet timeless real melodies and lyrics that go beyond the cliched "bling" of today's modern R&B and soul. 13 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: Soul, EASY LISTENING: Love Songs Details: There are only two things you need to know about me. Everything else flows from these two things. The first thing that you should know about me is that I'm Samoan (pronounced Saw-Mo-Un not Suh-Mo-Un "it's a long a") and that I was born and raised in American Samoa, a small volcanic island (now dormant) and U.S. unincorporated territory (there are no Federal Courts there) in the South Pacific about 2,600 miles SW of Hawaii (or 5 or so hours by plane from Honolulu International Airport). I was born in the village in Fagatogo, moved to Auasi for the first 6 years of my life, before going to a small village called Amouli on the far east side of the island where as a child, cars were so infrequent at night, my friends and I could lie down for hours at a time without worry of becoming a greasy spot on the road. Once in a while a car would come, someone would shout "e, taavale!" which means, "Hey, car!" at which point we would stand up, move to the side of the road to allow the car to pass, then we would go back to lying on our backs on the road, looking up at the stars. There are lots of stars in Samoa's night sky, quite unlike here in Los Angeles, which is where I now reside. We always had music playing on those nights when we used to safely lie in the middle of the road, which segues nicely into the second thing you should know about me. The second thing you should know about me is that I have made music my life's obsession. This stems from a lot of reasons. I was born of a bi-racial marriage between my dad who was born and raised in Alabama and my mother, who was born and raised in independent Samoa (once known as Western Samoa). My father, while not one while I was growing up, was at one point in his life a professional musician. He played fiddle in the deep south in the 30s, and according to him, even made it to the Grand Ole Opry playing with great bands like the Sons of the Pioneers. I have only his word to go on this, so if anybody reading this can confirm or deny this report, I would appreciate it. In any event, both my father and mother transferred their love of music to me as a child. I grew up singing in the car, listening to records, and of course, to things like Casey Kasem's American Top 40 radio show. My brother Bobby and

sister Sandra and I would play our parents records on their phonograph and transcribe lyrics. Well, when we first started, I was too young to read or write, so I would just listen and watch. As soon as I learned how to read, however, I started to transcribe lyrics as well and from this was born an enduring love of lyric and the interesting use of words, rhyme and meter the way a good writer can wrap words around his or her finger and keep you glued to a song like honey that sticks to a red and white, checkerboard picnic tabletop on a hot summer day. My mother had no particular talent for music. She was a great listener and fan of music. She did once take voice lessons as a young woman in New Zealand with some nuns, who promptly told her to be a sensible person and take up a trade. She believed them and essentially followed their advice and learned how to type really fast. This was more of an achievement when she did it than it would be now. Back then, typewriters were clunky affairs, with keys that stuck and were hard to push down, quite unlike the smooth and sleek keyboard that I am using right now. She loved hymns, and along with my father, they were most passionate about country music. My father and mother drilled country and folk music (both English and Samoan) into their childrens psyches. We are better people for it, but at the time, we did not truly see the benefits of finding our way through the social strata of the playgrounds and schools of Samoa with country music as our only musical badge. So we did what any sensible child does at this point. On the down low, we listened to the music that our friends listened to: R&B, Pop, Hip-Hop. This all took place, naturally, out of our parents line of sight, something that children, and in particular, teenagers, have been doing since the dawn of time. It is at this intersection between the folk and religious music of Samoa, the country music of my fathers past, and the popular music of my youth that played on the radio, that the music that I write and sing today can be found. But make no mistake, I am a pure and unadulterated R&B-head. I love melody, and I love words that mean something. Every musical artist Ive ever been obsessed with and influenced by has had both of these things going on. Thanks for stopping by, reading a little bit about me, and for checking out the music.

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