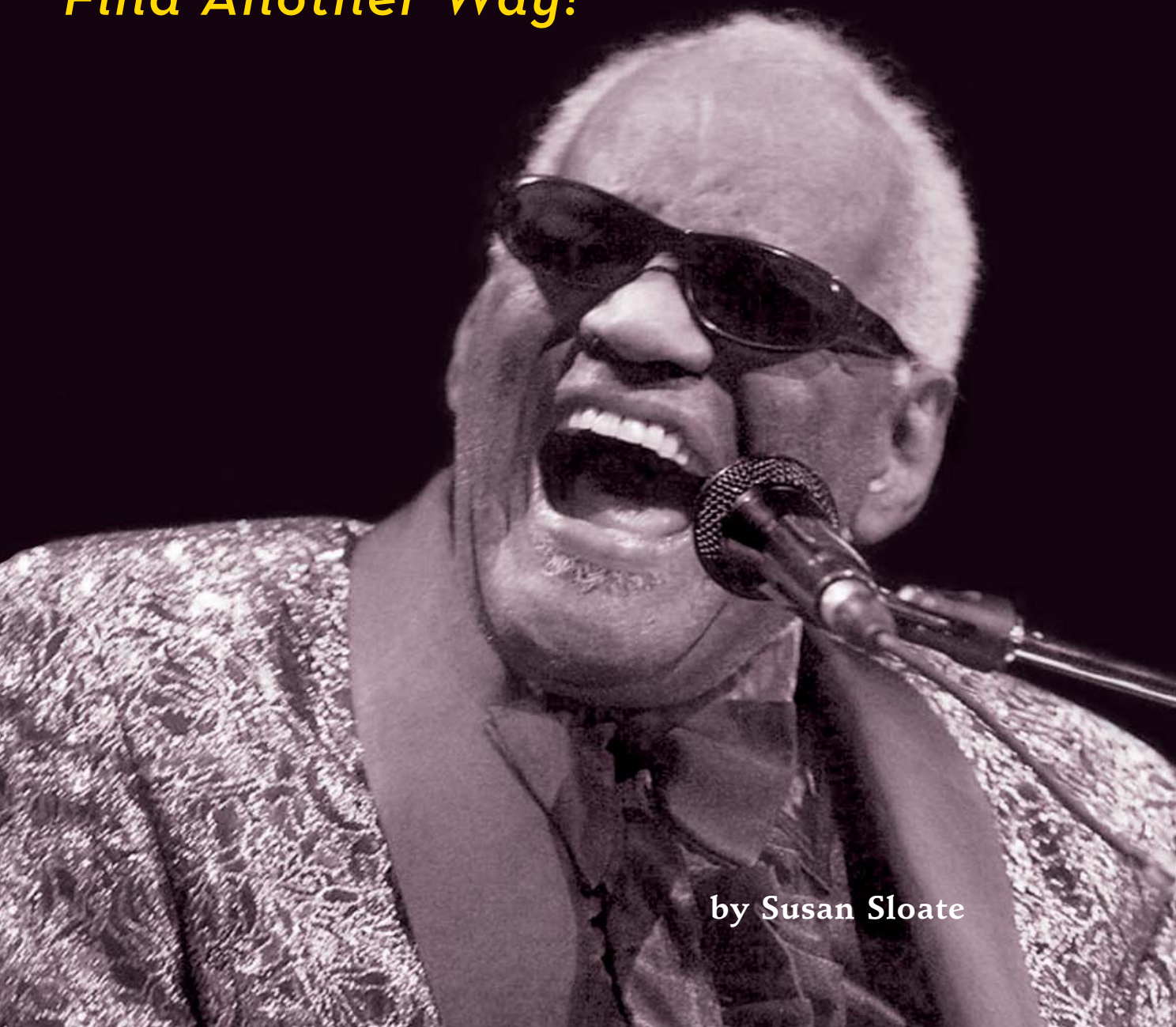


Ray CHARLES

Defining
MOMENTS
OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Find Another Way!



by Susan Sloate

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Ray CHARLES



Find Another Way!



by **Susan Sloate**

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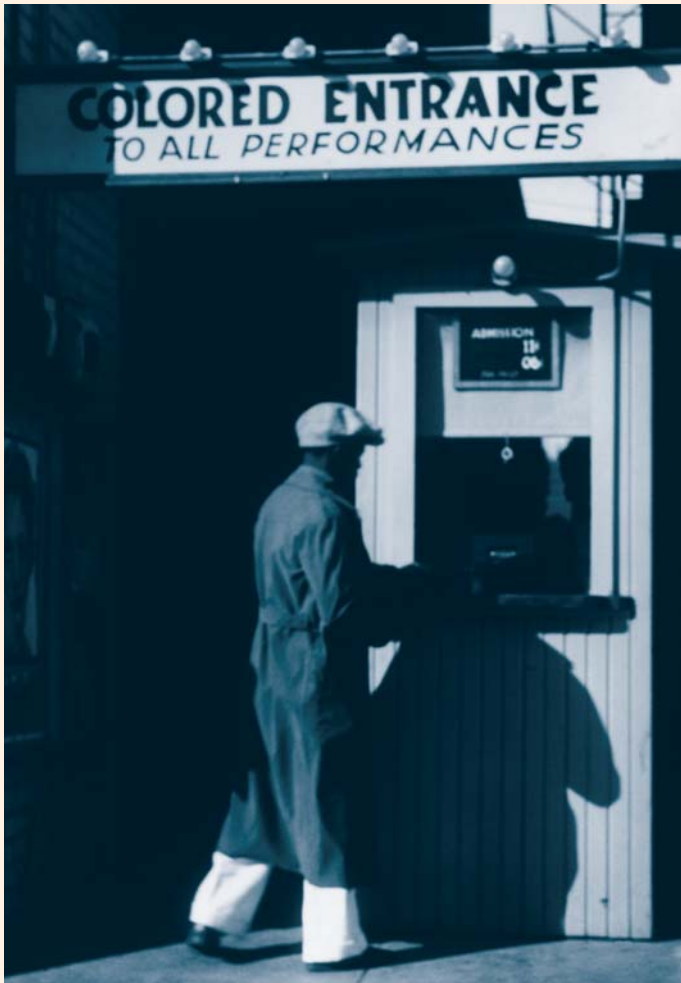
The Worst Seats

Blind musician Ray Charles and his band got off their big touring bus. They had just reached the concert hall in Augusta, Georgia. That night, Ray expected to play for his fans, who loved his swinging **rhythm and blues** music.



*The Bell Municipal Auditorium in Augusta, Georgia,
where Ray was scheduled to play*

However, the **promoter** told Ray that the audience had to be **segregated**. In the 1950s and 1960s, black and white people weren't allowed to sit together in the concert hall. Black audiences, Ray's most faithful listeners, had to sit high up in the balcony. These were the worst seats. Ray didn't think it was fair.



Until the mid-1960s, many places in the United States kept black and white people separate in schools, public bathrooms, and restaurants.

In the South, and in some other states, black people had to buy theater tickets at segregated ticket counters.

Ray Fights Back

Black people came to Ray's concerts, bought his records, and loved his music. He thought they deserved better seats. He suggested that they sit closest to him and the white people sit in the balcony. The promoter said no. In the South, white people always had the finest seats.



Ray Charles and his band



Ray always wore dark glasses to protect his eyes from dust and pollen.

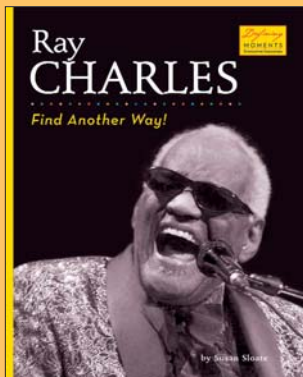
Ray decided that he and his band wouldn't play in Augusta. It was wrong to force his best fans to take the worst seats.

The promoter reminded Ray that he had signed a **contract**. "If you don't play," the promoter said angrily, "I'll **sue** you!"

"Go ahead," Ray said calmly.

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About the Author

SUSAN SLOATE is the author of many young-adult books and an adult novel, *Forward to Camelot*. She lives outside Charleston, South Carolina.

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Ray CHARLES

Find Another Way!



Ray Charles and his band had just reached the concert hall in Augusta, Georgia, where they were supposed to play. However, there was a problem. Ray was told that black and white people weren't allowed to sit together. His black fans had to sit in the balcony in the worst seats. Ray didn't think segregation was fair. Though he could be sued for breaking his contract, Ray decided that he wouldn't play. He knew he might have a hard battle on his hands, but as a child Ray had learned never to give up when times were tough.

Defining
MOMENTS
OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

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