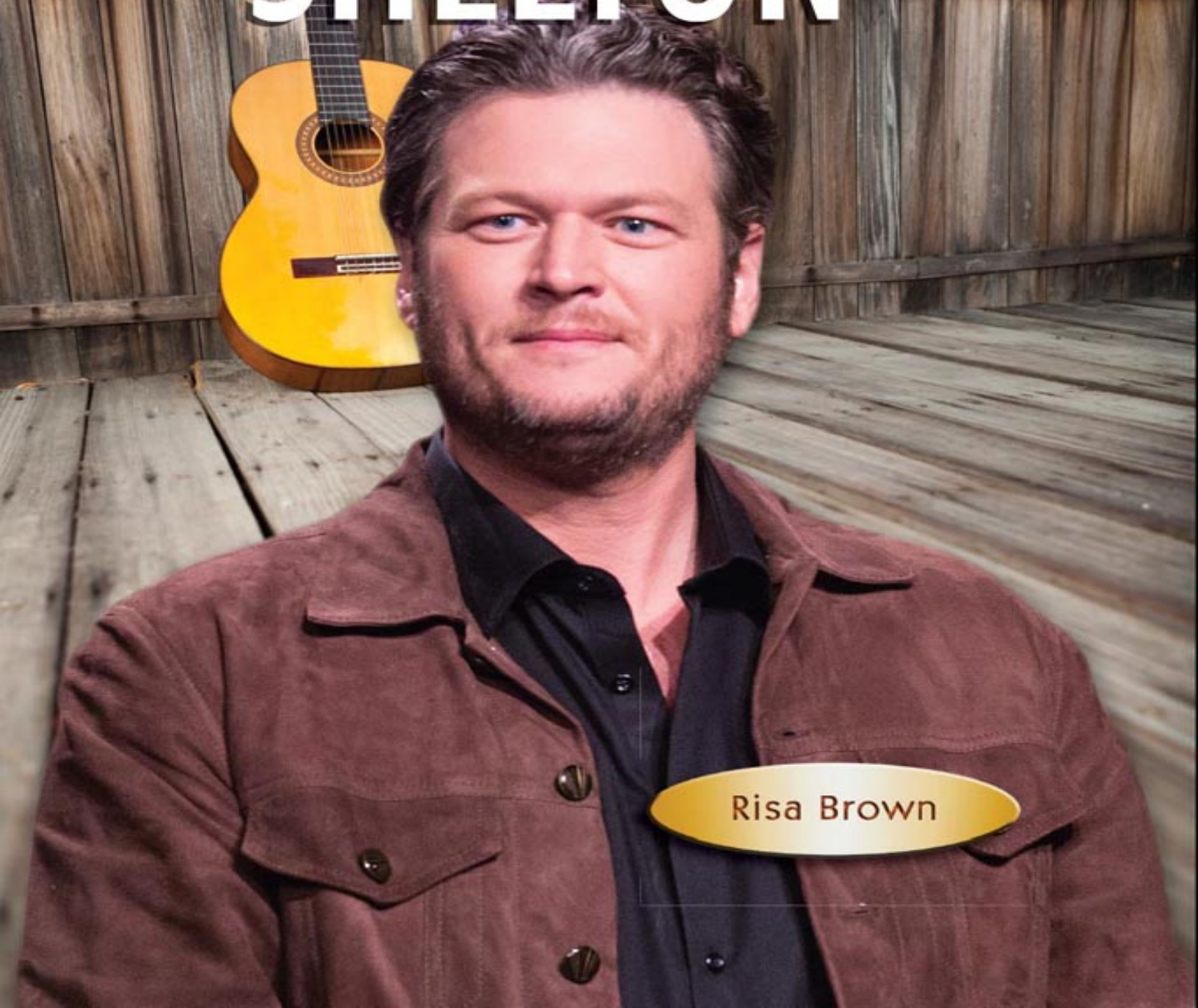




BLUE BANNER
BIOGRAPHY

Blake SHELTON



Risa Brown



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Risa Brown is the author of twelve books for children and three for librarians. She has been a children's or school librarian for twenty-three years. She now writes fulltime and lives in Arlington, Texas. She sings in a community chorus and loves to travel.

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Healing in the Heartland

On May 20, 2013, a powerful tornado hit Moore, Oklahoma. Thousands of homes were completely destroyed. Thousands more were damaged. Some of those buildings were elementary schools and the town hospital. People were killed, even children.

The whole country watched in horror and wanted to help. Blake Shelton, country music star and judge on the hit NBC show *The Voice*, quickly sprang into action.

Just two days after the tornado Blake and his wife Miranda Lambert performed the hit song “Over You” on *The Voice*. This song was special to Blake and Miranda. They had written it to honor Blake’s older brother, Richie, who was killed in a 1990 car crash when Blake was just fourteen. Their performance helped get donations for the Red Cross, an organization that is always on the scene of disasters to help people.

That wasn’t enough for Blake. Less than two weeks after the disaster, he organized a benefit concert to raise more money for the tornado victims. So many other artists were willing to participate that the concert was sure to be a hit. He named it “Healing in the Heartland.”

“Everyone has their way to help and mine as an entertainer is to perform to help raise money and awareness for this tragedy,” Blake said in a press release before the benefit.

To Blake, these victims were neighbors. He was born and raised in Ada, Oklahoma. He and Miranda lived in Tishomingo, only a hundred miles from Moore. They couldn't sit by and do nothing.

“Everyone has their way to help and mine as an entertainer is to perform to help raise money and awareness for this tragedy,” Blake said in a press release before the benefit.

One of his “Healing in the Heartland” guests was Reba McIntyre. She and Blake had previously teamed up in 2011 to help victims of a tornado that ravaged Atoka County, Oklahoma. But 2013's “Healing in the Heartland” was a much bigger event. For one, the need was greater because the tornado had done so much damage. For another, Blake was a bigger star. Because of his growing success and his work on *The Voice*, he had many new fans that rallied around his cause.

Blake opened the program with “God Gave Me You.”

Before singing “Threaten Me with Heaven” Vince Gill said, “I'd like to do this song for twenty-four people that didn't make it,” referring to those who had died in the tornado.

Miranda almost cried when pictures of lost pets were flashed on the screen while she sang “The House That Built Me.”



Blake and R&B artist Usher perform the duet “Home” as scenes of the devastation in Moore, Oklahoma, are shown during “Healing in the Heartland.”

Blake and R&B artist Usher closed the concert by singing a duet of “Home.”

The event not only raised money with ticket sales but during the benefit’s broadcast on NBC viewers could call in and donate money. Within hours, “Healing in the Heartland” had raised \$6 million. “Home” was later released as a download that continues to raise funds for Moore and its residents.

All the money raised went to the United Way of Central Oklahoma May Tornadoes Relief Fund. This special agency promised to help victims.

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