

CHAPTER 4

“Being Good Isn’t Always Easy”

Aretha Franklin, Janis Joplin,
Dusty Springfield, and the Color of Soul

What does Webster’s say about soul?

—Gil Scott-Heron, “Comment No. 1,” 1970

ON JUNE 6, 1965, the Rolling Stones released a single entitled “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction.” Clocking in at three minutes and forty-seven seconds, “Satisfaction” was a creative watershed that finally proved Mick Jagger and Keith Richards could produce songwriting of both quality and commercial viability to rival anything in popular music. The fuzzy guitar riff that opened the song became instantly iconic—Richards himself later recalled that he had imagined it as a horn line—and the band had never sounded better, with drummer Charlie Watts holding down a driving R&B backbeat, complemented by a relentless tambourine smacking out three eighth-notes on the