

True Love

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In Jennifer Lopez's first ever book, *True Love*, she explores one of her life's most defining periods—the transformative two-year journey of how, as an artist and a mother, she confronted her greatest challenges, identified her biggest fears, and ultimately emerged a stronger person than she's ever been. Guided by both intimate and electrifying photographs, *True Love* an honest and revealing personal diary with hard-won lessons and heartfelt recollections and an empowering story of self-reflection, rediscovery, and resilience.

Completely full-color, with photos throughout and lavishly designed, *True Love* is a stunning and timeless book that features more than 200 never-before-seen images from Lopez's personal archives, showing candid moments with her family and friends and providing a rare behind-the-scenes look at the life of a pop music icon travelling, rehearsing, and performing around the world.

Jennifer Lopez is an award-winning actress, singer, dancer, entrepreneur, fashion designer, film producer, philanthropist, and global icon. Lopez has established herself as a prominent figure in both the film and music industries, in a career spanning four decades. With records sales of 75 million and a cumulative film gross of over \$2 billion, Lopez is the most influential Latina performer in history. She lives in Los Angeles with her two children.

PREFACE

IT'S OPENING NIGHT, the first show of my first ever world tour.

This was the first time we'd be doing the full show that we had been planning and working on for more than six months. I am in full costume, backstage with the usual cast of characters. I bend down to give Emme and Max a kiss before my mom walks them off to watch the opening of the show. This was going to be the first time they'd see their mommy perform in front of thousands and thousands of people. The last time I was on stage like this, they were in my belly.

As they walk away, Emme looks back and stops. I'm being buckled into the rig on a twelve-by-twelve-inch platform. The huge, full-feather train of my white skirt pours over the edges and it must seem to her like I'm standing in a cloud. She seems a little nervous, but excited. I'm nervous, but controlling my fear. I'm about to ascend sixty feet into the air. I know it's crazy, because the crew is watching with faces that say, This is crazy! I give the operator the thumbs-up; he gives me the thumbs-up in return . . . and up I go, disappearing into the rafters until I am perched behind a huge video wall, where nobody can see me.

Emme looks up, watching me rise and rise and rise . . . From my perspective, everybody looks like little ants on the floor. I take a deep breath and think about the past year, all the hard work and the hard lessons that have led to this moment.

If I let myself, I could go weak in the knees. But I don't. I hold strong as the band plays the dramatic intro while the opening movie plays on the screen. And when the video wall splits open, I'm standing there, a hundred feet above the audience, and the crowd goes wild. The

spotlight hits me, and in my best old Hollywood voice I say: "HELLO, LOVERS."

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In this book I'm going to take you on the physical and emotional journey of the year I went on the first world tour of my career. The year that changed my life.

When I started planning the tour, I knew it was going to be the anchor for a very personal show. What I didn't expect was how cathartic it would end up being for me. The process of building the tour and performing it each and every night for audiences around the world helped me get back to who I am—someone who sings, who dances, who expresses herself and connects with people through music.

So many times I wanted to abandon writing this book because I knew it would be a difficult process, delving into the past and reliving some of my darkest moments. Also, I didn't want to be misread. I didn't want anything to overshadow the magnificence of this great journey. This book is not a detailed account of any of my relationships, famous or not. This is not a "tell-all," so I hope that's not what you're looking for. But by the end, I think you'll agree, you'll have gotten so much more. This book is about a series of patterns that go back as early as my childhood. This book is about my path and what I learned. It's the story of a transformative journey where I faced some of my greatest challenges, overcame some of my biggest fears, and emerged a stronger person than I've ever been. This is the story of how I discovered . . . the truest love of all.

My genuine intention and what I hope to accomplish with this book is that others can draw upon the experiences that changed the course of my life and find encouragement in the mantra that motivated the following pages:

You will live.

You will love.

You will dance again . . .

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I wake up in bed alone. The silence in my room reminds me of the emptiness in my heart. I failed at love—again. Except this time, it wasn't just me. I am haunted by the inescapable thought that I let down my beautiful babies, Max and Emme. I wanted so badly for things to have turned out differently.

As lonely as this bed feels, I can't bring myself to get out of it.

ROCK BOTTOM

HITTING ROCK BOTTOM

I remember the exact moment when everything changed. I was in the desert outside Los Angeles, getting ready for a photo shoot.

It was a beautiful day in July 2011, and Marc and I had just celebrated our seventh wedding anniversary. Anybody looking from the outside in would have thought my life was going great: I had a husband and two beautiful children, and my career was flying high. I was on American Idol, the number-one show on the planet, and my new single "On the Floor" had gone to number one all over the world. To top it off, People magazine had named me their very first Most Beautiful Woman in the World, a few months earlier. How could life get any better?

What people didn't know was that life really wasn't that good. My relationship was falling apart, and I was terrified.

And now here I was out in the desert, getting made up for a L'Oréal shoot. I had done hundreds of these before—you sit in the chair, get your hair and face made up, go out in front of the camera, and do your thing. But this day didn't feel like any other day.

As I sat there, my mind was racing. My heart was beating out of my chest, and I felt like I couldn't breathe . . . I became consumed with fear and anxiety. What was happening to me?

My mom, Guadalupe, who lives in New York and happened to be in town that week, came to the desert with me that day, and my dear manager, Benny Medina, was there too. As I found myself in a panic, I leaped from my chair and said, "Benny, something is happening! I feel like I'm going crazy."

In the end, the truth finds a way to surface, even if you don't want it to.

Benny, who has been through so much with me over the fifteen years we have worked together and been friends, took my hands.

"Hey, now, what's happening? What's going on?" he asked.

My mom rushed to my side, too, a look of concern on her face.

All I could say was, "I don't know. I don't feel right. I'm scared. I feel like I'm losing my mind."

He tried to calm me down, saying, "You're fine, Jennifer. You're good. Everything's okay." To him I looked completely calm. But I wasn't. It was one of those moments when you're so scared you can't even scream. It feels as if you're paralyzed.

We as human beings do this thing where we stuff down our feelings until they find a way to manifest themselves. We try to avoid them until there's no more room and they come bubbling up like a pot of boiling-hot water that overflows. And when it does, it burns, and it's scary. That's what was happening to me.

In a blur of fear and panic, I looked at Benny and my mother and blurted out the words: "I don't think I can be with Marc anymore." Then I burst into tears.

It was out.

The one thing I feared more than anything in the world. The one thing I had been trying for so long not to face. Deep down, I knew that nothing would ever be the same again.

I collapsed into their arms and began to sob. And like that pot of boiling-hot water, once it overflows, the pressure is released and it begins to cool down. All those crazy thoughts started to melt away because I had finally given voice to the real reason for my fear and panic. I knew what it meant to say those words out loud: It meant the end of my marriage. The end of our family. The end of the dream I had worked so hard to hold together.

And it meant more than that. It meant that once again I was going to be judged. I was going to be ridiculed, chastised, and mocked. I could already see the headlines: "Jennifer Lopez Headed for Divorce . . . Again!" Or, "The Woman Who Has Everything But Can't Get Love Right!" I was so scared to have another failure, to be scrutinized by the world, and to disappoint everyone . . . again.

But this time wasn't like any other time. It was worse. This divorce wouldn't affect just Marc and me. It would affect these two beautiful little souls we had brought into the world. I was devastated at the thought of hurting Max and Emme. I was afraid that I was about to ruin their lives, that someday they would resent me for not being able to keep this marriage together.

As I struggled with the idea of breaking up my family, I had to consider what was best for my kids in the long run, and I agonized over what would serve them best in life. I was pulled

in both directions, which is why I had fought so hard against admitting the inevitable. I couldn't admit that this marriage was over. But in the end, the truth finds a way to surface, even if you don't want it to. That day in the desert, with my brain going wild trying to deny reality, I had finally hit rock bottom.

HOPE FOR A BETTER DAY

On Christmas day in 2010, seven months before that L'Oréal photo shoot, we had a house full of people. Marc was there, and Emme and Max, and Marc's other kids, Ryan and Cristian, Arianna and Alex, as well as our parents, siblings, and friends. It was the kind of Christmas gathering I'd always wanted to have: a big, sprawling affair with our family at the center of it.

The house was filled with food and gifts and laughter, and that afternoon, twenty-four of us sat down to a beautiful Christmas dinner. Things between Marc and me weren't perfect, of course-our marriage was never the kind to glide along peacefully. From the beginning, it was tumultuous, passionate, and explosive, but we also shared many fulfilling and joyful moments. I knew we had problems, but we loved each other and we were trying, and I wanted more than anything to have a family-this family. So I was willing to ignore whatever wasn't going well, for the greater good of preserving it.

I thought that Christmas was exactly what I wanted. I thought we were finally getting it right, that it was worth putting up with the difficulties because this was what life was about. Every marriage has its challenges, but it was about keeping that marriage together, having that family unit, and making the dream come true-whatever the cost. Part of that concept still holds true for me: Family is most important.

But the very next Christmas, twelve months later, I was waking up alone. The only people in the house were Max, Emme, and my cousin Tiana, who had come to keep me company. My mother and my sisters, Lynda and Leslie, had decided to stay in New York for the holidays, and they had asked me to come out, but I didn't want to go. I wanted to be in my own home, as empty as it now felt.

I cried a lot that Christmas, though I tried to let the tears flow only when the kids couldn't see me. There's nothing like the holidays to make you feel a loss, and I was really feeling it. But then my dad, David, came over for Christmas dinner, and Benny came and brought his mom. So with Emme, Max, and everyone else, we had a pretty full table-even if it wasn't as full as the one we had the year before.

What I will always remember about that Christmas is not the tears or the loneliness, but the toast that Benny gave.

Other Books

Straight Acting, Fed up with the fact that men have a shorter shelf life than sushi? Finding,

let alone building, a strong relationship can still be challenging for gay men. The reason? Masculinity. All men, gay or straight, have been socialized to believe that to be overtly gay is unmanly and shameful. To compensate, many gay men adopt a macho, "straight acting" pose that blocks them from being their full selves, expressing their true feelings and forging real, lasting connections. In *Straight Acting*, Angelo Pezzote (AskAngelo.com) encourages readers to go beyond limiting ideas of how "real" men should behave, and leave behind outdated ways of being that create stumbling blocks to deeper intimacy. Drawing on his years of experience as a gay psychotherapist and advice columnist, he offers practical and thoughtful relationship strategies, with tips on subjects that include coming out, dating, how to avoid falling for a player, how to maintain a sizzling, satisfying sex life, navigating open relationships, and much more. Most of all, he delivers crucial insights on the importance of ditching the macho act and learning to be true to yourself. Whether you're single and sick of it, wanting to move closer to your partner, or wondering how to meet someone for the very first time, let Angelo show you how to get real and get him. Put yourself out there to get--and keep--the love you want.

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