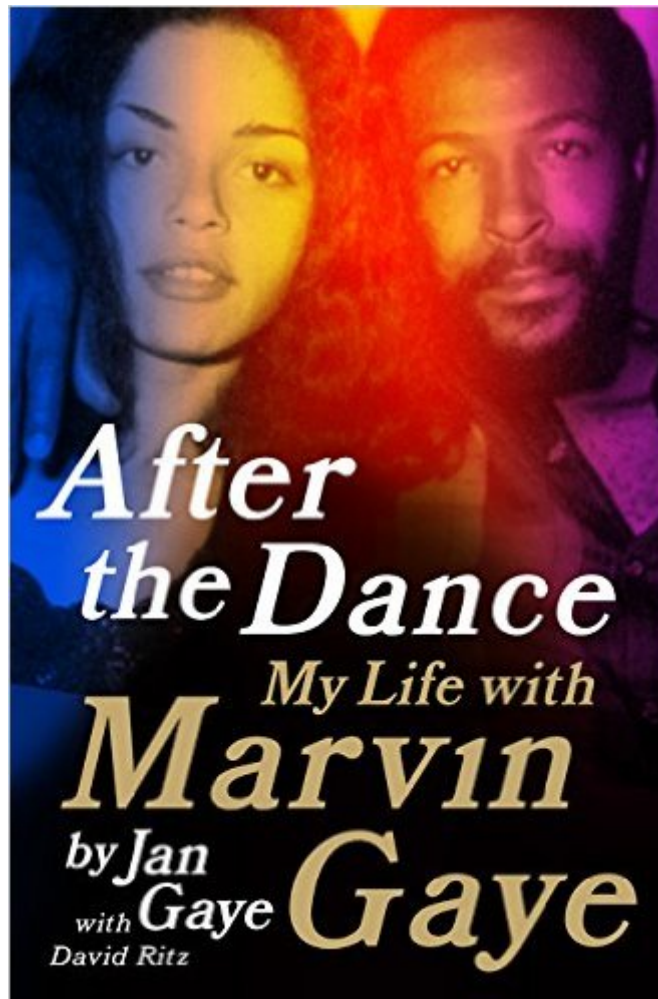


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After The Dance: My Life With Marvin Gaye



Synopsis

A riveting cautionary tale about the ecstasy and dangers of loving Marvin Gaye, a performer passionately pursued by all—and a searing memoir of drugs, sex, and old school R&B from the wife of legendary soul icon Marvin Gaye. After her seventeenth birthday in 1973, Janis Hunter met Marvin Gaye—the soulful prince of Motown with the seductive liquid voice whose chart-topping, socially conscious album *What's Going On* made him a superstar two years earlier. Despite a seventeen-year-age difference and Marvin's marriage to the sister of Berry Gordy, Motown's founder, the enchanted teenager and the emotionally volatile singer began a scorching relationship. One moment Jan was a high school student; the next she was accompanying Marvin to parties, navigating the intriguing world of 1970s-80s celebrity; hanging with Don Cornelius on the set of *Soul Train*, and helping to discover new talent like Frankie Beverly. But the burdens of fame, the chaos of dysfunctional families, and the irresistible temptations of drugs complicated their love. Primarily silent since Marvin's tragic death in 1984, Jan at last opens up, sharing the moving, fervently charged story of one of music history's most fabled marriages. Unsparing in its honesty and insight, illustrated with sixteen pages of black-and-white photos, *After the Dance* reveals what it's like to be in love with a creative genius who transformed popular culture and whose artistry continues to be celebrated today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"After The Dance: My Life With Marvin Gaye is not a sensationalized tell all, instead it is a

cautionary tale of how insecurity, dysfunction and cruelty can end the greatest of loves while that love can inspire world class art. Her uncertainty and insecurity made the then young girl submit to sexual fantasies of Marvin's that she now regrets. Her inexperience led her to forego her education, move in with Marvin and in the name of love, abandon any pursuit of marketable skills while becoming financially dependent on a free spending addict. Jan also reveals how she and her late husband shared a deep spirituality as well as a mutual love of top shelf quality drugs. In the book, she has shared as much about her personal struggle with, and triumph over substances as she has shared about anyone else's. Her heartbreaking tale describes how the ill matched couple had very little chance of succeeding from the start; she had been raised in an uncertified foster care home where she'd been dumped by her loving but drug addicted mother and became the victim of sexual abuse. He had been the son of a deeply religious, evangelical cross dressing father who'd beaten Marvin mercilessly for questioning the elder's fashion sense, and daring to raise the possibility that his gender bending attire may have brought dishonor to the family name. Marvin was also a superstar depressive who had lost his way and was using copious amounts of drugs to numb the pain from the break-up of his first marriage. Jan and Marvin never had a chance. I spoke with Jan, earlier this year, via telephone. She called for the purpose of nervously reading the book's first chapter to me, and getting my opinion. She hadn't turned in her manuscript to her publisher yet, so I felt flattered by the sneak preview.

I was 10 years old at the time of Marvin Gaye's death - I was familiar with some of his music but the days after his death is when I found out the impact that Marvin Gaye had on people. When I found out, Jan Gaye was releasing a book about her life with Marvin my curiosity light bulb went off. Once I read David Ritz was involved with this project - I immediately pressed the preorder button. The book starts off with Jan sharing with readers that she was fascinated with Marvin since she was a kid. Jan shared details of the abuse she endured in her childhood. She was 17 when her dream of meeting Marvin Gaye came true. After reading about the events of her childhood, I can understand why she held so tightly to Marvin Gaye. *After the Dance: My Life with Marvin Gaye* details Jan's steamy & rocky relationship with Marvin Gaye. Jan also gives readers an intimate look into the mind and soul of Marvin Gaye. There were some famous names sprinkled throughout the book like Margot Kidder, Richard Lawson, Rick James, and many more. Jan Gaye with the help of David Ritz draws you into their love story so much that you forget Marvin Gaye was a 33-year-old man carrying on a hot affair with a 17-year-old high schooler. Even though, Jan Gaye has said in interviews there are a few stories that she will take to her grave - what she shares in this book is enough to keep you

flipping the pages."I know GOD led me to you Jan, but the devil led me away..." - Marvin Gaye (as told by Jan) Sex, Drugs, R&B, and Love that wasn't quite over even after the dance. I tried my best not to reveal a lot about this book in my review, but there are a few things I had to get out.

I'm an autobiography/biography junkie, especially if it's about celebrities. So when I read about this book in the LA Weekly, I knew I had to buy it. I've watched various documentaries about Marvin Gaye through the years. I was aware that he was a complicated and brilliant person, with a vast amount of demons. I found Jan's account of her life with Marvin Gaye to be interesting, semi relatable, and disturbing. Since Jan was so young during most of her relationship with Marvin, I felt somewhat compassionate regarding what she went through. After Jan's story progressed, I came to the conclusion that she's a typical (name dropping) Hollywood hanger-on, with codependency issues. Once she reached a certain age, my sympathy faded. For example, Jan complained about being broke because Marvin wasn't giving her money (due to his financial issues with the IRS and poor decision making skills), but it doesn't seem like she ever made a decent effort to improve her and her children's lives by going to school or getting a REAL job. Jan was so eager to fulfill her own selfish desires by being a lazy and pathetic drug addict. This book kind of reminded me of "Jackson Family Values: Memories of Madness", by Margaret Maldonado (Jermaine Jackson's ex girlfriend/"baby momma"). Ms. Maldonado's situation was very similar to Jan Gaye's (one coincidence is that both of their men's first wives were members of the Gordy family). The difference is that once Margaret Maldonado left Jermaine Jackson (without having any financial support), she never went back and became a successful business woman. I know it isn't fair to compare the two, but I was hoping for some sort of success story to be told...or at least for Jan to wake up and make something of herself.

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