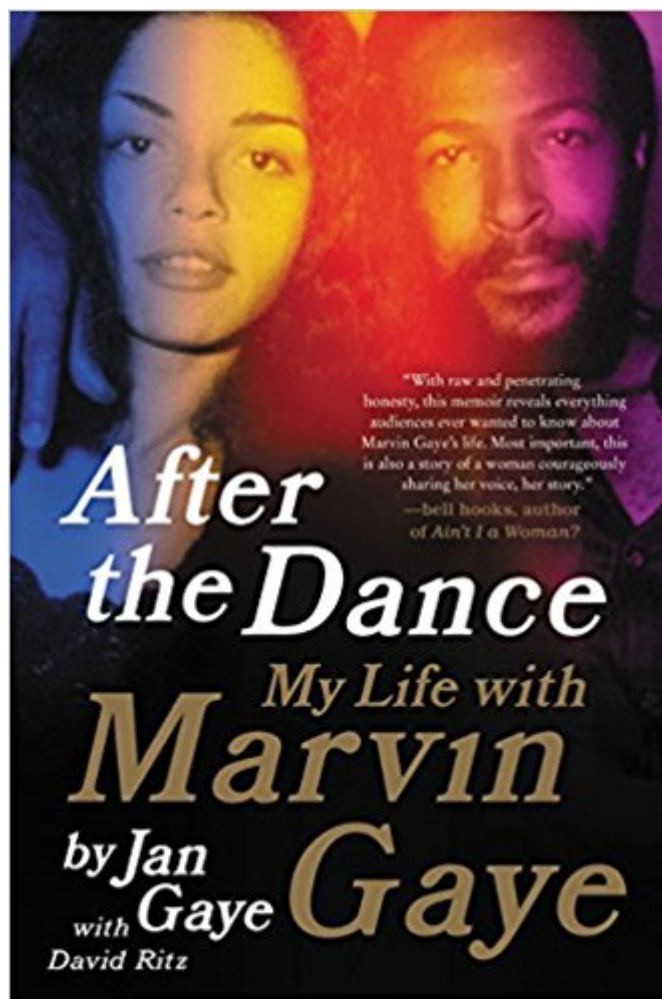


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# After The Dance: My Life With Marvin Gaye



## 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 billed as a new tell-all memoir. And it lives up to the hype.” (LA Weekly) “With sensitivity and insight, Gaye examines their explosive four-year marriage, ultimately making peace with the dark side of one of America’s most influential partners.” (O, The Oprah Magazine) “Jan’s writing is engaging, steamy, harrowing, and insightful.” (Library Journal) “...a story told honestly and directly, with real passion and plenty of behind-the-scenes insight. (Booklist) “If your heart is not affected greatly after reading, it’s time for a checkup... What a fabulous book of poems.” (Washington Independent Review of Books) “Jan and Marvin’s love affair is hot-and at times amazingly cold. We see how love can bring people together as well as tear them apart. This fascinating and entertaining memoir is an unforgettable education on the power of love.” (Zane, New York Times bestselling author) “With raw and penetrating honesty, this memoir reveals everything audiences ever wanted to know about Marvin Gaye’s life. Most important, this is also a story of a woman courageously sharing her voice, her story.” (bell hooks, author of *Ain’t I a Woman*) “The story made me emotional, confused, and sympathetic, all at the same time. Love, drugs, power, and demons-with a hint of other celebrity lives intertwined-make up Jan’s story with the legendary crooner. The raw storytelling, full of secrets kept until now, makes this book a treasure.” (LisaRaye McCoy, actress) “This stunning memoir is hot! It’s also unforgettable in its pain and vulnerability, which Jan Gaye presents with raw honesty. It will make all women love differently, but probably no less passionately.” (Grace Octavia, author of *Something She Can Feel*)

Shaped by a troubled childhood, Janis Hunter found solace with Marvin Gaye—the soulful prince of Motown with the seductive liquid voice, whose genius chart-topping, socially conscious album *What’s Going On* made him a superstar when it was released in 1971. Despite a seventeen-year age difference and Marvin’s marriage to Motown founder Berry Gordy’s sister, the enchanted teenager and the emotionally volatile singer began a scorching relationship soon after they met in February 1973. Their romance navigated the hippie high life of the seventies and took the couple from one adventure to another. But the distractions and burdens of fame, the chaos of dysfunctional families, and the irresistible temptation of drugs complicated the love they shared. Marvin and Jan hurt each other, and their relationship descended into a dark place, but the attraction was too magnetic and the love was too strong to let go. A searing memoir of love, drugs, sex, and old-school R&B that is unsparing in its honesty and insight,

After the Dance is the moving, passionate story of one of music history's most fabled relationships. Jan Gaye reveals what it's like to be in love with an artistic genius, a man whose words and music have touched the world and made him a legend.

"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 assured her that what she'd written was great, and it was, but in no way had her excerpt prepared me for the exceptionally intimate, personal and poetic work of depth and beauty that she and Ritz have delivered. Jan describe how life at the side of a glamorous '70s sex symbol was like living in the eye of a hurricane. She writes of the unscrupulous promoters, Marvin's ambivalence about performing, and his stage fright. She writes of Motown pressuring the superstar for bigger and more frequent hits. She writes of Marvin's loyalty to Motown chieftain, Berry Gordy, and Marvin's bitter resentment of Gordy's lack of appreciation for his artistic ambitions. The book insightfully examines the complications caused by Marvin's marriage to, and ultimate divorce from Gordy's sister Anna. There are also recollections of delusional managers who could not manage the great but unmanageable talent, and vignettes about accountants and business managers who could not convince Marvin to spend less frequently, save more often or pay his

taxes. She has written beautifully about the gorgeous messiness of love in the shadows of stardom while it's shrouded in the fog addiction. Recently Jan and her children have been in the news as a result of having won a seven figure judgement against Pharrell Williams and Robin Thicke, in a copyright infringement lawsuit, over the contention that their "Blurred Lines" record of two summer's back too closely resembled Marvin Gaye's dance floor classic "Got To Give It Up". It has been said that the landmark decision will put a chill on musical creativity, and that a business built on sampling the work of others has been rocked at its core. Time will tell. Of course, for me, the most interesting portions of the book are the ones where Jan describes the creative process that Marvin, the hit maker, went through to come up with the albums; "Here My Dear

I am a huge Marvin Gaye fan and have always found myself drawn to him due to his outstanding music and one of a kind personality. I have always been interested in his family life, and wanted to know more about the lovely lady, Janis, he chose to be his wife and muse. I pre-ordered this book and could not wait to read it once it came out. This is a phenomenal book and it does not disappoint! Once I started reading it, I could not put it down. I can barely find the words to describe how marvelous this book is. Jan and Marvin's story is told so beautifully and truthfully from Jan's point of view. Nothing in life is perfect and Jan bares it all. Jan tells of her difficult upbringing and weaves Marvin along into her story ever so effortlessly. I can only imagine being in her shoes at the time. Marvin was such a unique soul and so is Jan. Each chapter of this book is filled with jaw dropping tales of their lives together and apart. Pure love and heartbreak. Highs and lows. Arrogance and insecurity. Sweet bliss and sorrow. Lessons learned, forgotten and repeated. If you are a Marvin Gaye fan you should read this. If you enjoy learning about life in general, this would be the perfect read for you as well.

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. I'll give Jan credit for finally kicking her drug habit, but other than that she's pretty unremarkable. The conclusion of the book is sort of incomplete. I felt that she should've briefly shared more about her life experience since Marvin Gaye's death. I also can't help but to think that Jan only wrote this book because she's broke. If you love learning about the ups and downs of a celebrity's life by a subjective party, then this is an easy and somewhat entertaining read.

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