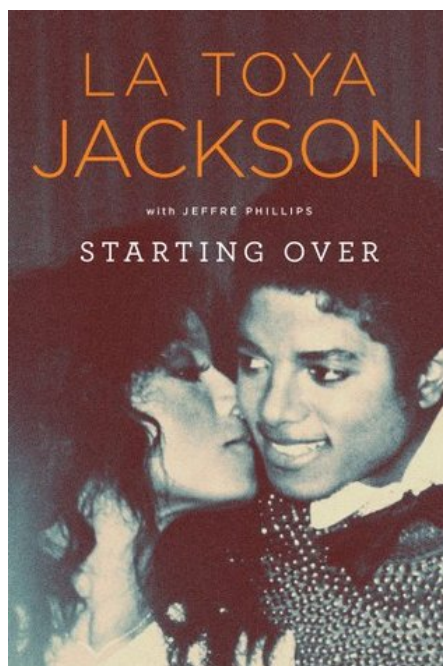




Starting Over

La Toya Jackson

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Starting Over La Toya Jackson

La Toya Jackson was always closer to Michael than anyone knew. In this heartfelt memoir, she pays tribute to his tortured soul—revealing the intimate moments she shared with the deeply troubled pop legend. The first sibling to arrive at the hospital after Michael was rushed there, and the informant on his death certificate, La Toya noticed suspicious details and demanded a second autopsy. For the first time, she unveils shocking behind-the-scenes dealings that she believes led to her brother's death, and she provides unprecedented insight into the destruction of one of the most dynamic artist/performers in history.

In an account sure to send shock waves around the globe, La Toya sheds new light on the dynamics of the Jackson family and the curtain of secrecy and intrigue that has surrounded her brother Michael, and the rest of the Jackson children, since they became stars in the '60s and '70s. She explains her estrangement from—and gradual reconciliation with—one of America's most famous and close-knit families.

Like Michael, La Toya experienced an upbringing that made her vulnerable to exploitation, and her own journey led to hell and back at the hands of her former manager and husband, Jack Gordon. Sharing with honesty and an open heart some of the most painful episodes of her life story, La Toya reveals how anyone—regardless of fame, fortune, or status—can be trapped in a cycle of abuse, and how she was able to find the courage to rebuild her shattered sense of self, her career, and her relationship with her family, and to finally break free.

This tale will touch the hearts of the millions who are fans of the Jackson family's music as well as those who have ever shared a special relationship with a sibling. Not just the story of the world's most renowned family, this memoir will inspire anyone who feels as if their life has fallen apart and there's nowhere to go, unless they too can learn to truly *start over*. . .

Starting Over Details

Date : Published June 21st 2011 by Gallery Books

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natasha says

I think I'd give this more of a 3.5. When I first started reading this book, I couldn't put it down. It was really a page turner. Latoya isn't the best writer, definitely not. She does have a distinct voice though. I'm not the biggest Jackson fan-but this book really opened my eyes and helped me understand more about their family. About halfway through til the end the book seemed a bit repetitive but it wasn't too bad to the extent where it ruins the whole book. I'm glad I experienced this book. I would have never picked this out on my own, and I'm glad someone gifted it to me. The reader can really sympathize with Latoya no matter what their own life has brought them. Anyways, it was a good story and look into the very real lives of celebrities.

Joni says

Unusually for a Jackson book, the parts about Michael are the least interesting. La Toya's a fascinating psychological study and a complex, unreliable narrator of her own bizarre life. After learning in this book how badly her mafioso ex-husband/manager Jack Gordon was abusing her in the 80s and 90s, I felt bad about making fun of her. I like a lot of La Toya's strangely addictive music and I think she's far from untalented. Gordon's domination of her life was violent and disturbing, and it seemed to explain why her career became so seamy and disreputable after *Heart Don't Lie*; the strip club tour, the exercise video, the first book, the country album, the Playboy centrefold et al.

But there were some parts of her story that just seemed too far-fetched and didn't fit. I went on YouTube and watched back the '93 Tel Aviv press conference where she told the world that Michael was guilty of child molestation. She's done a lot to distance herself from this awful little moment, and in this book she claims that she was reading her speech under duress off a piece of paper that Gordon had handed to her in the moment. Even casually watching and listening to her, this is obviously not true.

Also. Now that Jack Gordon is long dead, La Toya and her Waylon Smithers-esque partner Jeffre promote her work and business under the name JA-TAIL, and a lot of their projects are just as tacky and exploitative as Gordon's. On their website, I found this:

"Michael always felt that his music was a platform for him to promote awareness of humanitarian, equality, world peace and ecological issues. He was extremely concerned about international global warming. His inspiration for writing the song "Earth Song" was to let people hear the voice of our dying planet."

Ms. Jackson conducted extensive research and found that the simple act of outdoor car washing is a major contributor to water waste and pollution. To help combat this problem, Ms. Jackson teamed up with Chemist Tunch Goren, the premier manufacturer of high quality waterless car care products. With over two decades of research and development in the waterless car care; Mr. Goren proved to be the perfect partner to create Auto Spa Amazing Products...

Out of all the despicable acts of exploitation of Michael's name since his passing, using "Earth Song" to sell carwash products has got to be one of the very worst. This is especially rich from a sibling who claims to be in his corner. Her conspiracy theory that he was "murdered" in the second half of this book is not even worth discussing, but I think trying to stir up drama does fit her lifelong pattern of doing things for attention. While I'm not an expert on abusive relationships, I think she deserves a lot more of the blame for her unfortunate

life decisions than she is trying to make out.

Cracked once said of La Toya:

"Do not be fooled by the timid Michael Jackson impersonation -- it will use your bones to build its nest."

That's hilarious but a bit harsh, so let's quote La Toya's quote of Michael:

"Michael said it best in his song 'They Don't Care About Us', when he said, 'All I want to say is that they don't really care about us.'"

Shannan Harper says

It was an ok story. It focused more about her life with her ex husband, which is probably where the title came from, but it seems as if it was being marketed as if she knew who killed her brother. There were some talk of that in the book, but that doesn't seem to be the actual focus of the book as a whole. It was one I got from the library

Brad Jae says

This book completely blow me away... I have a better understanding on La Toya Jackson!!even though I always liked La Toya Jackson I have a better situation with the whole Jack Gordon events and accounts. Thanks La Toya for writing such inspirational and inspiring memoir!!!

Cherry Martin says

More a 3.5. Mostly about La Toya's story of surviving Jack Gordon, but the last quarter looks into the facts that don't add up surrounding MJ's death. A lot of details that only the family could share strengthen your suspicions of the circumstances of his death, but you can't help but feel that you should perhaps take La Toya's writing with a small pinch of salt.

Paula says

I don't really want to talk about his death because it saddens me! I had chills and goosebumps reading his final days and his service. :(He will never be replaced.

Overall the book gave insight to the Jackson life, especially La Toya and the days leading up to her brother's death. I didn't read her first book, I have no interest in it because I didn't believe it. I wanted to read this one and that of Janet's...after all they are the only connection left to Michael Jackson's memory and life (other than his young children). I, also, do not understand how a family member isn't on the estate board, especially his mother....of anyone who is going to look out after his kids...his mother will!!!

Latoya- overall, as a MJ fan, it was clear to me that something wasn't right. First why would someone speak out against the Jackson name if they want to continue to have fame, etc?! Even in America, where we are full of judgmental people, would we think that would be alright regardless of how much America thinks the Jackson's are crazy (I don't know them, but they appear to be as functional or dysfunctional like every other American family! Secondly, being that their mother appears to be the rock of the family, to go against her or disappoint her...within the family unit you would clearly be burning bridges. Thirdly...to go from supporting your brother, to going against him in what appeared to be days....didn't seem right in my head. Fourth-I believe it was on Maury that Latoya was on with Gordon...the whole thing seemed shady and with him (Gordon) being RIGHT there in nearly every single picture frame....looked like he was controlling to me. And if I remember correctly I believe the host of that show seemed to lean the same way?! Fifth-even if you were to rebel against your mother and family (many people do), someone who is very connected with their religion probably wouldn't go against that (JW, I'm assuming would not be a fan of posing for Playboy if they don't even like to have parties). It's unusual for someone to rebel against EVERYTHING... I do believe we all go through things for a reason...we may never know what those reasons may be but usually it makes us stronger in life. I believe we are meant to go through things to make us learn and grow! Otherwise why would we be here if it was perfect?!

When it comes to riding coat tails or trying to gain fame in MJ's name (or Janet's)--I imagine that everyone in the Jackson clan (brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews) are damned if they do and damned if they don't. If you don't put anything out there--well that must mean they are living off of their brother's money. If they do put stuff out there--that must mean they are hurting for money and using the Jackson name to make it. They should be able to make a living!

Child molestation-it absolutely sickens me that this could happen to him. Though I certainly do not agree with his lifestyle completely (how innocent I believe it was, I wouldn't have my child sleep in a grown man's bed...). Everything MJ has put out or said has contradicted the charges against him. Just like being anti-Semitic, if you listen to his lyrics and words....clearly he's not hateful!!

America- America's judgmental personality disgusts me. And it is quite sad and pathetic and I completely see why celebrities choose to go elsewhere. The media is brutal and harsh when, in fact, they know nothing about a person. Which unfortunately, as a fan that lives in America, didn't help me. Didn't help me get his music, had to pay megabucks for merchandise that was sold overseas, didn't help me attend his concerts. It just so happened that I became a mega fan during Dangerous (I was about 13, he helped me overcome suicide)- as we all know the Dangerous tour ended short. HIStory tour, I believe only came to Hawaii. I was "this" close to going to the NY 30th anniversary concerts. Thankfully I didn't, the person I was going to meet up with ended up being at the wrong place at the wrong time Sept 11th :(I know he didn't mean or want to leave his American fans out but I also knew how cruel they (not the fans) were to him :(it wasn't fair especially because we nor they (media, naysayers, etc) knew HIM!!!

Neverland- I wish they didn't taint the environment. Today that place could have been MJ's Graceland.

Paris, Prince, Blanket- how well adjusted they appear to be. Paris is growing into a beautiful young woman. Watching her onstage at her father's memorial...it's clear that she has the famous itch! She had no issues singing in front of all of those people. I wish them a lot of success, regardless of what they choose to do in life!! Prince looks to have taken over the role of being strong, etc. Blanket...watching him on Oprah reminded me of his father on interviews...very shy.

Mrs. Katherine Jackson-what a pure soul she looks to be! Kind, caring, gentle but straight forward...her on Oprah, her words when Oprah asked Mr Jackson a question...I laugh thinking about it to this day. What it must have been like to bury her own child before herself or her husband :(

FINALLY MICHAEL-I hope he is resting in peace! I hope his music and message lives on FOREVER. I do

not view him as GOD, I am not a fanatic. I'm a person who is grateful for his music and message. If it wasn't for him, I may not be here today. Being teased, stared at and tormented myself every day growing up because I was different...suicidal from ages of 9-13ish... His songs "Will You Be There" and "Keep the Faith" changed my life forever. Regardless of how much he altered himself, his perfectionistic personality, or his father's choice of upbringing...Michael Jackson was still a human being, a man with dignity, class, respect, LOVE, feelings..... Out of all of the crap that was said about him...he was still living life, making music...I do not know how he did without giving up (as I'm sure he was tortured...people don't change if they are happy with themselves) but I'm grateful!! His strength and determination to continue, helped me continue as well. I'm not sure ANYONE can see or understand his impact on this other than his fans and maybe his family! And the funny thing is...a person who was negatively viewed in the public, called names (child molester, crazy, weird, ugly,etc)....after he died-did you hear ANYONE talk bad about him? ANYONE!?! The people that knew him? All I ever heard was what a great soul he was....how giving he was...how down to earth he was...how caring, compassionate and loving he was....what a great friend he was....what a wonderful and devoted father he was....he wouldn't hurt a soul...he was quiet but polite and kind...he was a wonderful entertainer, a life changing dancer, a wonderful role model. Out of all the crap that has been said throughout the years.....does that sound like a person who deserved to have been dragged through the mud for years and years?!? Absolutely not!!! It is sad...very very sad to me. I just think if it was different for him...would he be the same person? If he didn't go thru what he did....would he be kind, caring, compassionate? Would he be as popular as he was? Negativity is definitely hurtful, it doesn't make it right but if it didn't happen that way for him...I'm not sure if I would had viewed him the way I did. I'm not sure if I would have seen the light of staying alive if it wasn't for his being, music, words, etc....know what I mean?! As selfish as it may sound...

Michelle says

Very fascinating look into the lives of the famous Jackson family written by Latoya's perspective. They have been through so much, yet they keep smiling and moving forward. I learned a lot not only about them, but with dealing with problems in my own personal life as well. I highly recommend this book!

Sarah Arntson says

As a person who didn't know anything about this Jackson sibling, I thought it was interesting to hear La Toya talk about her life. The book was easy enough to read, and entertaining enough to keep me reading to the end. Not the best written book, but not the worst either.

fleegan says

I can't believe I read this. I mean, I'm a sucker for a memoir sure, but even for me this seemed off.

Two things:

1. The first part of the book where she writes about how her manager/husband abused her for years? That part was okay. It wasn't fun to read about or anything, but it was important and real and that makes for a good book.
2. The second part of the book where she talks about her brother Michael, and then claims that there was a

conspiracy to murder him even though she hasn't one tiny piece of evidence other than Michael once told her that he thought someone was going to try to kill him, well, that half of the book was ridiculous. She went on too long saying the same thing over and over, but never actually explained her conspiracy theory at all. Redundant, uninteresting, pointless.

One other thing:

1. Apparently she was on a reality tv show called Armed and Famous and I guess it's like celebrity COPS. So she was on it and she was sworn in as an officer in some town in Indiana and her partner was a real police officer. So she films this tv show for 5 weeks, right? Now I'm not saying that's not a tough gig, you don't see me volunteering or anything, however, in the book she keeps saying things like, "As a police officer..." and then when she's spouting off about this conspiracy theory of hers about MJ's death she's all, "Using my experience as a police officer..." or whatever, I mean, no. Lady, you're not a police officer. You were on a show. For 5 weeks. Stop it.

Nada says

It's obvious that La Toya learned her lesson from telling it all about the Jacksons in her previous autobiography, which she claims was all lies because she kept this one neat and simple.

However, La Toya: Growing Up in the Jackson Family is far more organized and revealing than Starting Over. It's crucial to read her first autobiography before starting with this memoir to be able to comprehend the full picture of how her world fell apart.

Jack Gordon, her ex-husband and manager, was a criminal who got ties with the mafia kept her captivated; took all her money; confiscated her passport; brainwashed her against her own family then cut her ties with them; physically abused her into submission; threatened her life and the lives of those who are dear to her. In other words; he destroyed her career and her relationship with her family.

This memoir is divided into four parts:

- 1- How she was kept captivated and abused
- 2- Her escape and family reunion
- 3- Michael Jackson's death
- 4- Starting over

The first part of the book is most interesting and well-written while the rest of it is not well-thought and all over the place. The problem with the book is that she advertised it as if she knew and was going to reveal who killed Michael Jackson, and as if she got new information that were not revealed before.....she did not. She had no contact with him for the longest of time. She knows nothing other than what she heard from a few fans who were there during that period.

All I'm trying to say is: either she knows nothing and just wanted to sell her book so she made it appear like that or she knows but she cannot speak out. Either way, she offered nothing regarding her brother's murder that we, fans, didn't know before.

However, the last chapters raise important question: were they rushed to murder him because he got fed up and was about to leave as he did before with Prince Abdullah and some other times before? Especially that

he was worth more dead than alive.

I always knew and believed they were after him but the more I think about it, the more I'm convinced that the way he was killed is flawed. Why were they so rushed? Why was it so urgent?

Her story is a life-lesson to every woman when it comes to rebellion and domestic violence. I've certainly learned a lot from her. I just wished she escaped sooner to save herself from all of that. I wished she reached out to her family before all the damages that she (helplessly) caused—before it was too late. Sigh.

All in all, this memoir is decent but it could've been way better as there's nothing much here that wasn't known already.

Maya Hollinshead says

I know you think that this whole book is about Michael. But it's not. About half of the book is about her abusive relationship to her ex-husband/manager. 1/4th is about recovering from that and being able to move on with her life and the rest is about Michael's death. She does have some theories about her brother's passing (that he was killed for his estate and song catalog). But it's not a bad book.

Cheryl says

She's a nutcase, along with the rest of the family. (Aren't we all though?) I only read this book because I didn't have a "J" book author in mind, so my friend lent it to me. It was painfully slow, and La Toya very repetitive in her phrases. Some of her word choices were so ridiculous. No one in their right mind speaks like that. At any rate, I think the most interesting part of the story is about the end of MJ's life, and his last days, and even that wasn't all that interesting.

Ice says

La Toya Jackson was always closer to Michael than anyone knew. In this heartfelt memoir, she pays tribute to his tortured soul—revealing the intimate moments she shared with the deeply troubled pop legend. The first sibling to arrive at the hospital after Michael was rushed there, and the informant on his death certificate, La Toya noticed suspicious details and demanded a second autopsy. For the first time, she unveils shocking behind-the-scenes dealings that she believes led to her brother's death, and she provides unprecedented insight into the destruction of one of the most dynamic artist/performers in history. In an account sure to send shock waves around the globe, La Toya sheds new light on the dynamics of the Jackson family and the curtain of secrecy and intrigue that has surrounded her brother Michael, and the rest of the Jackson children, since they became stars in the '60s and '70s. She explains her estrangement from—and gradual reconciliation with—one of America's most famous and close-knit families.

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find the courage to rebuild her shattered sense of self, her career, and her relationship with her family, and to finally break free.

Liebes Buch says

I guess all of us know La Toya Jackson as the black sheep of the Jackson family. What most of us don't know is that she wasn't responsible for the bad choices she made. At 30 when she wanted to get independent from her family she became the victim of her criminal manager who was connected to the mafia. On a business trip to Japan he took her passport and that was the beginning of a decade of violence, abuse and isolation. La Toya was basically kidnapped and not allowed to meet her family or even talk on the phone. Her husband would threaten her and beat her- to the point when he called the police reporting that she was dead. But she survived and finally managed to escape. In her book she describes the fear and shame of the abuse and how she was destroyed as a human being and as an artist. It is shocking to read how domestic violence is the same no matter if you are famous or just an ordinary person. The last part of the book deals with the death of her brother Michael. He also becomes the victim of a brutal management that isolates him from the rest of the world. While La Toya succeeded in running away Michael Jackson didn't escape. I had no idea how easy it is to be totally absorbed by managers who control your life. I am deeply impressed by this book. This is one of the best books I ever read.

Winter Sophia Rose says

Riveting, Inspirational & Enlightening!
