

Oh, Drew, You Naughty Girl p.2

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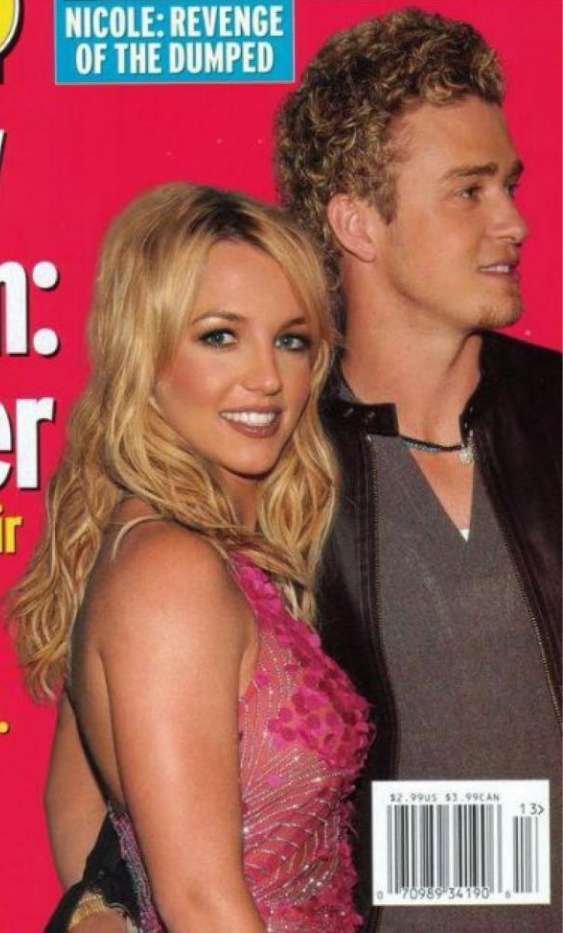


**NICOLE: REVENGE
OF THE DUMPED**



Britney & Justin: It's Over

Friends say their
picture-perfect
love was never
what it seemed.
Here's what
finally drove
them apart



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Nicole's Rules
For Surviving
A Divorce

#1

Keep your eyes
on work

"Nicole seems to have become even more beautiful," a friend says of Kidman, here at the *Moulin Rouge* premiere in Cannes, France, in May.



Nicole—Success Is the Best Revenge

It's been 411 days since Tom ambushed his wife with the news that their 10-year union was kaput. The talk at the time was that Nicole would slink off to Australia and Tom would rule Tinseltown. Who's laughing now?

THERE ARE THOSE WHO WALK the red carpet, and then there is Nicole Kidman, who seems to rule it like a conquering empress. Take the March 10 Screen Actors Guild Awards in Los Angeles, where the 34-year-old Aussie upstaged a procession of the gorgeously dressed and stunningly tressed — among them, Halle Berry, Jennifer Connelly, Kate Beckinsale and Cameron Diaz — in a black, backless Jean Paul Gaultier gown. Frighteningly beautiful and utterly glam, Kidman was, in a few words, a *movie star*. Never mind that the Golden Globe winner had a nasty case of bronchitis and was exhausted from a flight from Stockholm, Sweden, where she had been filming the drama *Dogville*. Never mind that, with the Academy

By JD Heyman



"She is devastated," said a friend after the split; Kidman in February 2001.

Awards just weeks away, the very single best-actress nominee for *Moulin Rouge* didn't yet have a dress — or a date for the Oscars. A giddy Kidman let everyone know that she was there to enjoy herself. "I don't really have anybody to bring right now. So I'm looking," she said later. "It's been quite a year."

It certainly has. Kidman has gone from being Mrs. Tom Cruise to being an inspiration to the suddenly dumped. At the moment, the woman whose life was publicly in shambles in February 2001 is simultaneously Hollywood's hottest bachelorette and one of its most sought-after actors.

Kidman's friend Elizabeth Himelstein, who has been her accent coach on several films, says she has been in awe of the actor's ability to rebound. "She doesn't hold

a grudge," says Himelstein. "She took the adversity and became stronger." Kidman doesn't disagree with that assessment. "In a strange way, this has been the year I grew up," she said recently. "I went, 'OK — I'm not going to have everything work out the way it was meant to work out.'"

Through it all, she has never lost her sense of humor. When David Letterman asked the 5-foot-10 woman, who had once towered over the 5-foot-9 Cruise, about single life, she said, "Well, I can wear heels now." More recently, when she thought about going to the Oscars for the first time without him, Kidman quipped: "I've always been on Tom's arm. Maybe now I'll finally get to choose my own dress — Tom never liked me in red."

For a decade, she had been happily married to Cruise, whom she met in 1989 on the set of *Days of Thunder*, when she was just 22, and then married a year later. She has been a devoted mother to their two adopted children, Isabella Jane, 9, and Connor Anthony, 7. Family overshadowed her acting career, and Kidman was fine with that. "I hope we are together when we are 80," she had said of her life with Cruise. "I will be devastated if we are not."

With those words, Kidman foretold her future. On February 4, 2001, Cruise reportedly informed Kidman that he wanted out of their marriage — and that his decision was final. He allegedly moved out of their Pacific



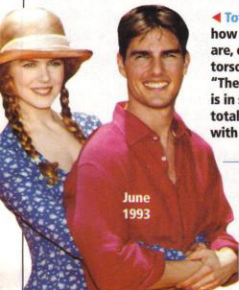
"She adores those children," says Himelstein of Kidman, with Isabella and Connor in December.

Palisades, California, mansion that day. To add insult to injury, when Cruise formally filed for divorce on February 7, his lawyers claimed that the marriage had actually fallen apart just shy of the 10-year mark — a significant distinction in California, where mar-

riages that last a decade or longer are subject to the state's community-property laws. That meant that Cruise, whose \$250 million net worth is more than double that of Kidman's, wouldn't have to divide in half his fortune with his ex-wife.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

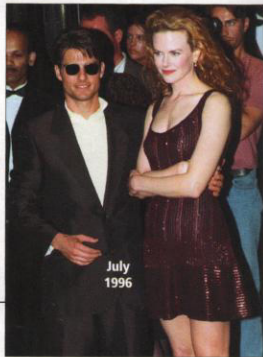
Since her split from Cruise, Kidman is more comfortable with her sexuality and has a lot more confidence, according to body-language expert Patti Wood. The proof is in the pictures



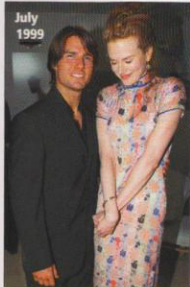
June
1993

◀ **Totally together:** "Look how close their bodies are, especially the torsos," says Wood. "Their body language is in sync. She appears totally comfortable with their relationship."

Hint of a rift: "This one really shows a negative progression. He has his arm around her, but she makes it impossible for him to



July
1996



July
1999

▲ **Headed apart:** "Her face shows a little-girl embarrassment look. And look at her hunched shoulders: like a turtle going into her shell. It's a protective reflex."

had somewhat subsided. They divvied up a \$350 million fortune. She got the five-bedroom Pacific Palisades spread and a multistory waterfront home on Australia's Sydney Harbour; he kept a 280-acre estate in Telluride, Colorado, and several airplanes, including a \$28 million—plus Gulfstream IV jet. They agreed to have joint custody of their children — and to keep the terms of Cruise's alimony and child-support payments secret. "We still care about each other," Kidman said. "We are great friends," said Cruise. "She is someone I love and always will." When Kidman received the Distinguished Decade of Achievement in Film Award at the ShoWest convention in Las Vegas on March 7, Cruise went so far as to take out a congratulatory advertisement in *The Hollywood Reporter*, an industry trade paper. "No one is more deserving of this award and such career recognition than you," it read.

HOW SHE GOT OVER IT

DENVER THERAPIST CAROLYN BUSHONG, THE author of *The Seven Dumbest Relationship Mistakes Smart People Make*, admires the gumption that Kidman has shown through it all. "She's a terrific role model," says Bushong. "She could have let herself go. Instead, she focused on tomorrow, not what she lost."

Kidman's close circle of friends helped pull her through. "She's a real girl's girl, the kind of girlfriend all girls want to have," claims Himelstein, who says Kidman rushed to her side when her mother died a few years ago. Friends say Kidman loves nothing more than long chats over tea with her buddies — many of whom are Australian actors living in Los Angeles, like Watts, whom she has known since they were both 14 years old in Sydney. When Watts landed a star-making role in last year's *Mulholland Drive*, it was Kidman who cheered her on. Watts recalled recently that during her lean years, it was Kidman who told her "One thing, Naomi. One thing can change everything." When Kidman needed Watts, she repaid the favor. "Naomi's like my sister," Kidman says of the friendship. "She moved into my house when I got divorced and took care of me."

Watts was aided by Kidman's younger sis-

Nicole's Rules For Surviving A Divorce

#3

Don't jump into a new relationship



"She loves to laugh," says a friend; Kidman after *Moulin Rouge's* premiere in Cannes.

ter, Australian TV reporter Antonia Kidman-Hawley, 31. "She's my best friend," says Kidman. Her father, Antony Kidman, a clinical psychologist whom she calls her "lifeline," and her mother, Janelle Kidman, a nurse and an outspoken feminist, have also been a source of strength. Says Himelstein, "Her parents have always been there to tell her to pick herself up and move forward."

Kidman wants to be the same kind of parent for her children, whom she plans to raise far from Hollywood, in the more down-to-earth environs of Sydney, at the palatial harborside home she had purchased with Cruise. "She's a completely dedicated mom," says a friend. "She exposes them to art and culture constantly — travel, ballet, fine food." Divorce has made Kidman that much more devoted to parenthood. "My success was always going to be my marriage, so I suppose in my eyes I'm not successful at all," she said. "If my kids tell me in 10 years time, 'Mummy, you raised us the best way you could, and we're very proud of you,' then I will feel a success."

With Hollywood at her feet, it's hard to see how Kidman couldn't feel successful. Now all she needs is a man to share her hard-earned



With her brother-in-law, Angus Hawley, in Sydney in December

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#4

Rely on family and friends

fortune with. But although she's been linked to singer Robbie Williams, Counting Crows frontman Adam Duritz and Italian film executive Fabrizio Mosca, she's not yet ready for romance. "She's not dating anyone at the moment," says her spokeswoman. "She's happily single — as happy being single as any of us are."

Which begs the question of her Oscar date. Kidman isn't telling whose arm she will be on. "At the moment, I'm not bringing Baz [Luhmann]," Kidman told reporters, hinting

