



Dizzy & Jimmy: My Life with James Dean: A Love Story

Liz Sheridan

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A long time ago, when I was a young dancer in New York City, I fell in love with Jimmy Dean and he fell in love with me.

So begins this beguiling memoir of Liz "Dizzy" Sheridan's passionate yet ill-fated romance with the young, magnetic, soon-to-be-supernova James Dean. The year was 1951. Dean had recently arrived in Manhattan in search of Broadway stardom. Sheridan was a tall, graceful aspiring dancer. They met one rainy afternoon in the parlor of the Rehearsal Club, a chaperoned boardinghouse for young actresses -- and before long Dizzy and Jimmy were inseparable. Together they hunted for jobs, haunted all-night bars and diners, and gloried in the innocent rebellion of early-'50s bohemian New York. Dizzy Sheridan and James Dean were lovers; they lived together; as even ardent Dean fans may be surprised to learn, they were engaged to be married. But when Dean began to find success on the Broadway stage and then was lured to Hollywood, the couple parted amid tears and broken dreams -- dreams that would be dashed forever when Dean died in a car crash in 1955, not long after seeing Dizzy for the last time.

Dizzy & Jimmy marks the first time Liz Sheridan has written about this joyous yet ill-starred romance. She brings us closer than we have ever been to the vibrant young actor before he became a Hollywood icon, capturing his unstudied charm, his complicated psyche, the spontaneous delight he took from the world around him, and the passion he invested in his work and life. It is a journey that takes in many locales, from Dean's boyhood home in Fairmount, Indiana, to Sheridan's recuperative travels through the Caribbean after their breakup. But at its heart *Dizzy & Jimmy* is the story of a love affair with Manhattan -- of nights spent stealing kisses in Times Square, sharing a walkup in the Hargrave Hotel, dancing after hours beneath the stars in Grand Central Station. And in Sheridan's bittersweet, embraceable telling, it becomes a story no reader, Dean fan or otherwise, will soon forget.

Dizzy & Jimmy: My Life with James Dean: A Love Story Details

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Author : Liz Sheridan

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Skullmarie says

I have always thought that Liz Sheridan was a classy lady and a fantastic actress, but this book brought me even more respect for her. I'll admit that a tough cookie like me bawled like a baby at the end of the book, not so much over the death of Dean, but over the aching sense of loss that this book brought. Being a huge Dean fan, I have often lamented the death of such a amazing man, but this book brings it to a personal level. I would highly recommend this book to anyone, even if they are not a fan of James Dean, because everyone can relate to this story of love lost. Kudos to Liz Sheridan for sharing such a personal part of her life

Sammi says

an excellent memoir of a relationship that I've read about briefly and getting the perspective of one of Jimmy's lovers.

Vicki says

I'm not so sure how accurate this book truly is since it's taken primarily from Liz's memories. She apparently destroyed all their love letters etc after his death over 50 years ago and after that length of time with the grief and emotional traumas she claims to have experienced, the facts and details can become altered in one's mind. Besides I did find several errors within it. Perhaps, it should have been proofread first by someone else who knew him. I live about 15 miles from Fairmount IN, where James grew up on the Winslow farm and even closer to Marion IN where he was born, and we locals read about him in the newspapers quite often, especially whenever his birthday rolls around, then again each September when its time for the world famous James Dean festival. Plus articles, books and many of his personal items are on display in our local museums and libraries. With all this around me, I wanted to learn more about his mysteriously private, romantic side. Needless to say I was quite surprised to learn all this about Liz Sheridan, for honestly I had never heard much about her before. The very best I can do is give this book 2 stars. Actually, I wish I hadn't read it. I wish I'd just kept this side of Jimmy a mystery unto myself. Hummmm...perhaps Liz should come here to the next festival, have a book signing and Mark(ie)could share his memories of their visit to the farm all those years ago when he was a child. I don't know if that's ever been done just a thought.

Antoinette says

I found this fascinating!!! Practically every book I've read about the enigmatic James Dean details with almost fiendish delight his seemingly difficult nature. This book concentrates on his more endearing qualities. I think his personality was unformed and that he was shy, insecure, socially inept and, quite probably, mentally ill. Dizzy Sheridan was fortunate to know and to live with the singularly talented James Dean in a time, the 1950s, when young men and women just didn't do that ! I loved reading about bohemian New York, their seedy apartment, the trials of the Starving Artists. This unique story was delightful, told in

an unaffected way.

Jo says

I just don't find this believable. Liz Sheridan became world-famous late in life as Jerry's mom on *Seinfeld*, but less people know that as a young woman in the early 1950s she unknowingly scored the ultimate bragging rights by going out with a then-unknown James Dean. It's no doubt a story she's told at parties for fifty years, and I suspect that with each retelling it got more exaggerated until it was enough to fill these rather suspiciously self-serving 300 pages.

There are just too many swoon moments, too much of the Mills & Boon factor for this romance to ring true. It reads like fan fiction and I think it probably mostly is. I'm sure her and Jimmy had something together, but with everything else I've read about him - respected biographies with lots of sources and interviews, written by historians without an agenda - its hard to make this fit well with Dean's personality, with the chain of events that led him where it did. Plus there are no photos included of the two of them and a lot of the things she has Dean say are just too perfect. But who knows, really. The life you might write about might be mine.

Mira says

I don't go around handing out 5 star ratings. And in the end there is nothing special about the way this book is written, but the story is so riveting. You forget that it's nonfiction. I bought this book for a dollar, and it was the best dollar I've ever spent. For anyone who has ever marveled at James Dean, rented all of his movies and had a Dean Weekend, or sat up endless hours and researched his life online...this book gives you a whole new perspective and makes him that much more enigmatic and appealing and tragic. And you'll want to find Liz Sheridan and give her a giant hug.

Beth says

I really don't know what my sudden fascination with James Dean is but I really find him intriguing. Therefore, I really enjoyed this book. I also found it interesting that he had a love affair with the actress/dancer who played Jerry Seinfeld's mom on Seinfeld. They were such an impulsive, almost child-like couple. In reading this book and others about James Dean I have come to the conclusion that I probably wouldn't have liked him as a person, but he is a very talented actor and I find his life fascinating.

kathy says

Liz sheridan shares her story about her relationship with James Dean. As she tells her story of Jimmy the out of work actor not the icon we know him as today you get swept up in their romance. I personally enjoyed getting know what Jimmy was like before he made it big and how he was on a day to day basis. If you are a JD fan, a classic movie fan, or just like to read about a good romance this book is a great one. i loved it.

Amanda says

If only I were born sixty years earlier...my obsession with James Dean is eternal and this book is a beautiful portrait of the boy behind the brooding mumbles.

Bridget Petrella says

Notes From The Author— "A long time ago, when I was a young dancer in New York City, I fell in love with Jimmy Dean and he fell in love with me." So begins this beguiling memoir of Liz "Dizzy" Sheridan's passionate yet ill-fated romance with the young, magnetic, soon to be supernova James Dean. The year was 1951. Dean had recently arrived in Manhattan in search of Broadway stardom. Sheridan was a tall, graceful aspiring dancer. They met one rainy afternoon in the parlor of the Rehearsal Club, a chaperoned boardinghouse for young actresses— and before long Dizzy and Jimmy were inseparable. Together they hunted for jobs, haunted all-night bars and diners, and gloried in the innocent rebellion of early-'50s bohemian New York. Dizzy Sheridan and James Dean were lovers; they lived together; as even ardent Dean fans may be surprised to learn, they were engaged to be married. But when Dean began to find success on the Broadway stage and then was lured to Hollywood, the couple parted amid tears and broken dreams— dreams that would be dashed forever when Dean tragically died in a car crash in 1955, not long after seeing Dizzy for the last time.

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Addy says

A sweet, real seeming story about two starving artists falling in love in the fifties. My only question is is it true? The author claims so but there are no pictures of the two of them together, I think she may have came up with it for the money.

Teresita Galea reyes says

I bought Liz Sheridan's book at Comic-Con in Novi, Michigan couple a years ago. I was shock, she was James Dean's ex-girlfriend. reading about their past love, their living together & going separate lives, their trouble lives, his dying. I cried towards the end. these people who are actors, as fans we enjoy watching, has private lives that has a history also

Naomi says

During my James Dean obsessed teens I read several books about him. This is one of the few to actually seem to be based in fact.

Joleen Johnson says

I ran across this book at the Library and I thought it looked very interesting. I love the idea of hearing a love story about someone famous, before they were famous! You always hear talk about James Dean, this Sexy Icon of the 50's. I couldn't wait to read about him from the point of view of a an old flame.

This was certainly a lovey dovey story. I enjoyed hearing about it all, it was a little over the top here and there, but it was the 50's and things were certainly different back then. James Dean really didn't seem like the heartthrob I thought he'd be, yes they said romantic things here and there, but he really seemed to be a haunted kind of guy, even to those close to him. He really came off to me as a guy really in touch with his emotions. Things really got to him.

Dizzy, was a corky young dancer and she was just head over heels for him, I couldn't understand the split since they both seemed to still really love each other but I think Dizzy, just wasn't comfortable with the fact that Jimmy had a sort of affair with a man.

This put me off a little too. I was quiet suprised about it, I hadn't heard this ever before. I googled it after I read it, and found out that a lot of people heard of his outings with men. It kind of seemed to me like he was doing this stuff just for fame. I guess that happens a lot, but it struck me as odd.

I still really enjoyed it all. At the end when Dizzy learned of Jimmy's death it really hit me emotionally, she saw a his movie and in it, he said something exactly the way he'd always said it to her. I was in instant tears. I felt like it gave her some sort of closure. But putting myself in her shoes, I can just imagine how emotional it must have been for her.

Jan C says

I really enjoyed this book.

The story of a love affair between two aspiring artists and New York City. What happens when one artist hits it and the other doesn't? At one point she says something to the effect that she hopes she will have "the grace to leave with class or possibly the class to leave with grace."

She shows us a picture of the young James Dean (I know, he died young), before he was a star. But he always liked to drive fast. And apparently she did, too. Or, maybe she picked it up from him.

One part I enjoyed was when the two of them and a mutual friend decided to hitchhike to Fairmount, Indiana - Jimmy's home. He shows her all around the farm. They each get roped into giving a lecture to his old drama teacher's class about life as actual artist.

It is funny and kind of sad, too, because you know the ending. But it was a very nice love story. And it all takes place against the backdrop of New York City and playing in Central Park.
