

**TO THE STARS YOU LOVE** 

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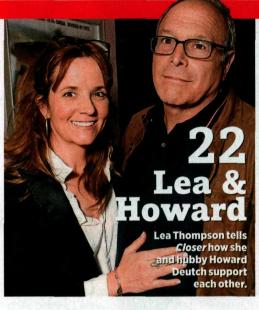
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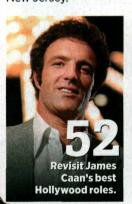
# Learned

What I've



"The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate."

-Oprah Winfrey



18 **18** 

Marsha Mason talks with *Closer* about her relationships, career and more!

#### Joke of the Week

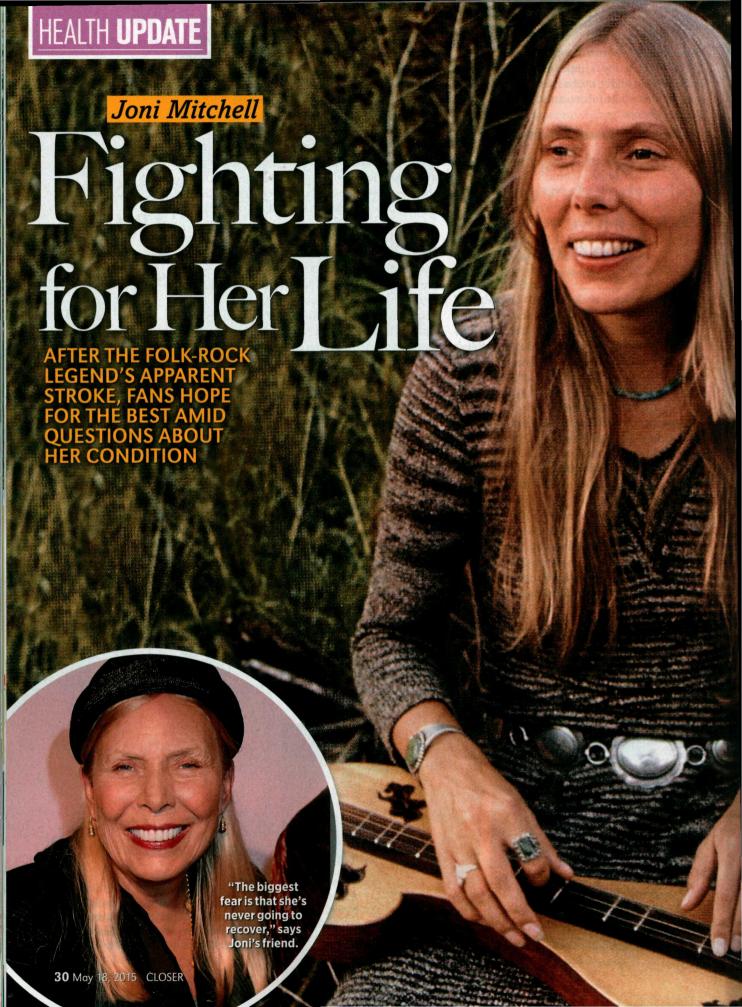


"By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere."

-Billy Crystal

LOCKWISE FROM LEFT: AP; GETTY (3); SPLASH

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# LOVE SONGS Joni was married twice, to folk singer Chuck Mitchell from 1965 to 1967 and bassist Larry Klein (right) from 1982 to 1995. She also dated Warren Beatty, Jackson Browne. **James Taylor and** Graham Nash (below).





#### Joni painted a self-portrait for the cover of her 1969 album, Clouds.

# BLUE PERIOD The New York Times

called her 1971 album, Blue, one of the "turning points and pinnacles in 20th century popular music."



"In some ways, my gift for music and writing was born out of tragedy, really, and loss."

oni Mitchell's devotees have gotten mixed messages about why the folkrock icon was rushed to UCLA Medical Center on March 31 with what a friend calls "pretty profound respiratory issues." The exact details of what occurred, much like Joni's life, are shrouded in mystery. When reports emerged on April 28 stating the singer, 71, was in a coma, her reps denied it. "While it's been written that she's unconscious and unresponsive," adds an insider, "that's a case of the medication the doctors are giving to stabilize her. She knows who she is and is aware of her surroundings."

Still, there's no doubt the singer's health issues are serious. The friend tells *Closer* it is believed she suffered a stroke at her home in LA, and since she lives alone, it was some time before she was discovered unconscious. "Joni is severely impaired right now," says the friend. "She's been in intensive care for a month and it doesn't look like she'll be released any time soon."

It's a sad reality for Joni, who once embodied the idea of the bohemian, uncompromising female with deeply personal, bittersweet lyrics in songs like "Chelsea Morning," "Woodstock" and "Blue." The singer-songwriter who once defined a generation is now bedridden — and her loved ones can't help fearing the worst. The Canadian native had already been suffering from a mysterious, de-

bilitating skin condition called Morgellons disease. "It affects all the body's systems, leading to fatigue, inability to focus and neurological symptoms," Cindy Casey-Holman, executive director of the Charles E. Holman Morgellons Disease Foundation, says. Now Joni's dealing with "very wide and severe" health issues, says her friend, adding, "This is a dire situation."

Her close friend of 44 years, music contractor Leslie Morris, applied for conservatorship of Joni — a move that, according to Joni's website, gives Leslie the authority "in the absence of 24-hour doctor care to make care decisions for Joni once she leaves the hospital." "Joni is closer to Leslie than anyone else in her life, and Leslie is trying to see Joni through this," said the friend.

She has a rough road ahead of her, but the eighttime Grammy winner has forged through many difficult times — and always on her own terms. As one of the few women who were part of the '60s music revolution in LA's Laurel Canyon, she transformed her high-profile heartbreaks into musical poetry.

"What Joni Mitchell did was way far and above what most of the guys, myself included, could do as a songwriter or guitar player," said The Byrds' Chris Hillman. No matter what happens, "she enjoyed her life and tried to make the most of it," said her friend. "We're all pulling for her."

-Lynn Davey