



...A DIVINE DIVA

...candid, tender, poignant and provocative

by Johanna Rossi
on the melody of "Why" by Annie Lennox

She seemed to have it all... beauty, brains and brilliance, the day Lady Diana Spencer became Diana, Princess of Wales was a pivotal moment in modern history. But underneath her fresh faced beauty, lay a very complex story. Using her big blue eyes to their fullest advantage, melting the hearts of men and women through an expression of complete vulnerability, Diana's eyes, like those of Marilyn Monroe before her contained an appeal directed not to any individual, but to the world at large. "Please don't hurt me" they seemed to be saying... Yet she was one of the richest, most powerful and glamorous women in the world. This combination of power and vulnerability was perhaps her greatest asset and ultimately proved to be her downfall, in the eyes of the British monarchy at least... An iconic presence on the world stage, Princess Diana was noted for her sense of style, charisma, humour and high-profile charity work, yet her philanthropic endeavours were overshadowed by her scandal-plagued marriage to Prince Charles. From the time of her engagement to the Prince of Wales in 1981 until her tragic death in a high speed car accident in 1997, Diana was known as one of the most famous women in the world, the pre-eminent celebrity of her generation. During her lifetime, she was often described as the world's most photographed woman. To her admirers, the Princess of Wales was a role model, she was beautiful, she was to be queen of England, and was already dubbed the "Queen of Hearts" by the media. What was it about her that so captured us, her heady cocktail of glamour, wealth, beauty and vulnerability... Just five months before her tragic death in August 1997, Princess Diana was photographed by the world famous Mario Testino for *Vanity Fair*. The book *Diana, Princess of Wales by Mario Testino at Kensington Palace*, published by Benedikt Taschen brings together the most beautiful images from this last portrait sitting, displaying Diana in a state of relaxation and intimacy unlike any other. The selection of about seventy photographs includes many unseen images which, alongside previously published images, fill in the untold story of the shoot. Candid, tender, poignant, provocative, the photographs allow readers an entry into the private world of a beloved icon where an uncensored view of a woman who influenced the world is on display. The book includes a foreword by Graydon Carter, editor of *Vanity Fair*, an introduction by Meredith Etherington-Smith, who played a major role in arranging the sitting in 1997, and an interview with the photographer Mario Testino himself conducted by *Vogue* editor Hamish Bowles.