

# LESLIE

EX-BOYFRIENDS LIKE

AND

COULD BE A TOUGH

# BEGA'S

ACT FOR A BOY TO FOLLOW. BUT WHEN ROCK AND ROLL ROMANTIC, JON

# INXS-IVE

FARRISS, SURPRISED LESLIE BEGA WITH THREE CARATS OF "ICE" IN HER FRUIT

# LOVE

SORBET, SHE COULD ONLY THINK OF ONE THING TO SAY... BY PRUE RUSHTON

# STORY

The photos on these pages are for Jon, from Leslie, with love. Or maybe that's with sex, because that's what she was aiming for. "Really sexy shots," she shivers...then, pouting, "I miss my honey so much — it has been *too* many hours." It has been three hours, to be precise, since she, at the very least, laid eyes on Jon. Not many to most, but for these two lovers, it is rare time apart. Leslie is in Australia to be with Jon while INXS gets down to some technical rumbling in its Sydney studio. And when it came to choosing between being with Jon and Michael or doing a photo shoot with Cleo, she chose us — we have to say we were flattered.

She arrives late, having delayed her farewells from Jon for as long as she could. Even though she greets us, cheery and bright, it isn't long before separation anxiety starts to sink in. Such is the power of their love. "We wake up every morning and look at each other and cry. We miss each other while we sleep. I mean, it's heavy," she whimpers.

Not that she is, like, totally miserable or anything, it's just that Leslie's very dramatic when it comes to her love for Jon. "It's heavy," she repeats. "It's almost to a sick extent, we're so mushy," she offers freely.

So do they love in excess? (Sorry about this.) The seventh of every month marks the anniversary of their meeting and is celebrated as such. Every Sunday is set aside as *their* day, and they do adorable little things like cook each other breakfast in bed, bike-ride in the park and pick flowers in the garden. They call it "Happy Love Sunday". Now they take "Happy Love Holidays" in places with cute names — Pee Pee Island, off Thailand, is their favourite. And, best of all, they even waited until Valentine's Day

this year to finally tie the knot. So who is this woman who has married into Australia's best-known band? Leslie Bega, born in Los Angeles 25 years ago, is an actor. Her most notable credits include: regular for four years on television's *Head Of The Class*, guest appearance as misunderstood rich kid in the movie-length premiere of *Beverly Hills 90210*, and the role of Anna Lansky in *Mobsters*. Jon, at 30, is the youngest Farriss brother, drummer for INXS, most often (and, we guess, accurately) described in print as "the romantic of the group", and clutched to millions of teenage hearts as the cutest. As a couple, they aren't as first-name famous as, say, Michael and Kylie were. But as celebrity couples go, these two are stunningly glamorous — a little piece of Hollywood meets world-renowned rocker — and they have quickly become flashbulb fodder.

Unlike Leslie, Jon is not completely comfortable with putting his love in print. "Happy Love Sunday...um...geez, she really laid the whole lot on you," he splutters down the line from the studio. "I don't necessarily care to or like to promote something that's really private and personal." Big pause. "But the reality of it is that I'm very proud to be associated with Leslie, even just to know her, affect her greatly and to be her friend," he decides. "I'd describe Leslie as one of the purest souls I've ever met," he says, warming to the conversation. "She's genuine, extremely trustworthy and an inspiration, you know, in what is really good about human beings...she's an angel, really," he finishes.







## EVERY SUNDAY IS SET ASIDE AS THEIR DAY, AND THEY DO ADORABLE LITTLE THINGS LIKE COOK EACH OTHER BREAKFAST IN BED, BIKE-RIDE IN THE PARK AND PICK FLOWERS. THEY CALL IT "HAPPY LOVE SUNDAY".

While Jon is hesitant on Love and Romance, stopping to clear his throat at regular intervals, it's hard to budge Leslie from the subject. "I like talking about our love. I feel that it's something people can prosper from. It's a beautiful thing, so why not be proud of it? It's not a bragging thing. It's not a boastful, pompous, arrogant kind of thing...I'm *very, very*, happy, and..." Maybe Leslie just understands these things better. After all, being Hollywood born and bred, she isn't media shy – and her big sister, Michelle Bega, is the publicist for Steve Martin, Bruce Willis and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

This might seem like a match made in Hollywood headlines, but Jon and Leslie are far from interested in the hype that usually goes with it. Theirs is, quite simply, a good, old-fashioned Love Story. It began at a party on the afternoon of April 7, 1991, during the LA leg of the INXS "X Factor" world tour. You could almost say their meeting was just like Romeo and Juliet, if only they weren't both over the age of consent. And what is vaguely endearing is that neither had a clue who the other was. "She walked through a doorway where I was standing," Jon reflects, "and, um, I was sort of, um, bewildered by her beauty...and I made sure I had eye contact with her, so that she knew that I wasn't...I don't know, you can speak to someone with your eyes. She looked and, like, double-looked, and I was like...*oh...oh*," he gasps sharply and continues, "heart beating and pants changing shape and all that sort of thing. And she walked straight past me... She was like a dream come true for me. You know," he questions innocently, "when you dream about someone the whole of your life and you realise that you've found the person you've been dreaming about?"

The Passion took slightly longer to strike Leslie. Mildly embarrassing is that not only did she not know what INXS members looked like, but the only INXS song she could name was, appropriately enough, "I Need You Tonight". Jon was just some guy blocking her entrance. "I said, 'excuse me', and kept walking by. I wasn't being mean," she apologises, "I just wasn't looking." It wasn't until later when she went outside again for a drink... "And that's when I, like, *really* noticed him," she pauses and, drawing a long, deep breath, exhales with, "Jon's goooooorgeous. He really is."

That Jon and Leslie find each other "goooooorgeous" is undeniable. But as with, say, a box of assorted choccies, they insist it's what is on the inside that makes all the difference. It was later at a group dinner that – despite Jon being accompanied by a pre-arranged date – they found out they also had romance and humour in common. "What has really made me fall in love with him," glows Leslie, "is that he's the most sincere, warm-

hearted, kind human being that I've encountered in my life." But having Jon Farriss ringing you up the next day pleading "I was up all night thinking about you. I didn't sleep once. I was staring at the ceiling and just couldn't get you out of my mind and my heart. I've just got to see you" wouldn't hurt either. "I've never said that before," admits Jon, "but Leslie was a bit sceptical of me because there was this other girl. But I think she could tell that I was generally a decent guy because, um...um," he falters, "I am, I guess. And because I'm not just sort of like fucking everyone around, you know?" He chuckles, embarrassed.

Their first date was an INXS concert. But you couldn't call it a date date because Leslie spent the whole time in the bathroom holding up the very inebriated model/actor who was Hutchence's

then-paramour. Jon, thoroughly smitten by this stage but committed to continuing with the tour, couldn't bear to part company with Leslie, and postponed his trip by a day. Obviously, it must have been a something-filled 48 hours, because when it came time to go... "We were devastated," remembers Leslie bleakly. "We were weeping uncontrollably at the airport. And we talked for about 20 hours a day on the phone." With phone bills mounting and Jon's "Come down here, please. I miss you. I need you", Leslie decided, "Forget work. OK, I'll come down. I can't believe I'm doing this, but I will". And I did," she flings her hands resignedly, "and ended up staying with him for a whole four months."

Leslie soon learnt what being ON TOUR with one of the world's leading and most notorious bands really meant: a chaos of international transit lounges, rehearsals, concerts, not enough sleep and, predictably enough, the groupies. "It affects you when you know these girls are all legs and tall beautiful blondes, and you know what they want, and they're so conniving in the way they try to get it. But," tiny and dark, she shrugs, "I know he loves me." And anyway, if she needs reassurance, there was always the romance – flower-filled rooms, candle-lit baths, a surprise holiday in Phuket and, a few months later, The Proposal.

It happened in the extravagant elegance of LA's Bel Air Hotel Restaurant. "Jon had never worn a suit to dinner before," she begins eagerly, settling in for an intricate description. "He was *soooo* nervous, he couldn't even talk. And usually, we're like blah, blah, blah, blah. Jon was really adamant about me ordering dessert. And I didn't want dessert because I was dieting at the time. So," she continues, "I thought, 'I'll get sorbet, that's not too bad'. And they put all these different sorbets around a plate and in the middle was a coriander flower. And in the middle of that was my ring – an antique diamond ring. I was so overwhelmed with

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