

Heche says her life journey has been 'Crazy'

Ellen's ex details childhood abuse

By Ann Oldenburg
USA TODAY

NEW YORK — For three years, she and Ellen DeGeneres caused a flurry of headlines as Hollywood's most famous lesbian couple.

Now, Anne Heche is married, pregnant (due Feb. 28), developing a sitcom and promoting her new book.

The actress today embarks on a 10-city tour to talk up *Call Me Crazy* (Scribner, \$25), in which she writes of her abusive childhood, her closeted gay father, her alternate personality named Celestia, and what really happened that day in Fresno, Calif., last year when she was found wandering and muttering about a spaceship.

"There have been many things put out about me that were not the full story," she says. "So I thought it was important and necessary to tell the whole story. In telling the whole story — whether you like it, don't like it, think I'm insane, think I'm sane — you'll see we are on a journey that is an individual process toward healing our-

selves, I believe."

Although Heche does not mention DeGeneres until page 211 (out of 248), one of the juiciest passages already being excerpted is one in which Heche writes that soon after she and the TV actress met, Heche had the "best night of lovemaking I had ever experienced." It's making headlines just days after the 32-year-old Heche wed cameraman Coleman Laffoon, 27.

"I can't say it's a husband's favorite thing to hear," she said Wednesday as she happily chatted about the book over a tuna-sandwich lunch in a fancy restaurant. With her blond hair pulled back on one side with a barrette, and wearing beige pants and a low-cut black sweater, she was instantly recognizable. The waiter con-



gratulated her on the marriage. She smiled.

Nothing in *Crazy* is a surprise to Laffoon, she says, describing him as "grounded" and "wise" and explaining that he helped write and edit every word.

Highlights include:

► She had herpes at age 8; sexual abuse by her father might have begun when she was still in diapers; she and her three siblings were often beaten with a wooden spoon.

► That day in Fresno was the culminating moment of her "insanity." She had taken one Ecstasy pill, which she took because she needed to get on a spaceship to heaven to find love. Celestia — a name taken from her middle name, Celeste — was part of a "fantasy world" she created to escape the real world of abuse. A particularly intense episode happened for 12 days after the shooting of *Donnie Brasco*. She

says stigmata — bleeding marks resembling crucifixion wounds — appeared on her feet, and she had a vision that she would have "the next Immaculate Conception."

► Her brother killed himself when he was 23, running a car off the road.

Heche also devotes a few pages to comedian Steve Martin, with whom she had a two-year love affair before she met DeGeneres. She hasn't spoken to him in years, she said Wednesday. "Ellen and I ran into him on the street one day. It was *not* a joyous occasion."

She says now that her relationship with DeGeneres (Heche says she has not spoken to her since last year) was a "marriage" in terms of commitment to each other. Their split had "nothing to do with sexuality."

(DeGeneres' spokesman said Tuesday that she has no comment on the book or Heche.) And Heche says she "hopes" to be married to Laffoon forever. She explains it by saying: "I've fallen in love with different people."

Says Heche, "People want to call me gay, call me straight. Call me stuff, but I'm here, grounded and finally sane. I'm at the beginning of my life now."