

# 'I'm not ready to sleep with another woman,' says Peter Andre

The broken marriage, the breakdown, the split with the Jehovah's Witnesses. Peter Andre's kept a dignified silence since breaking up with Katie Price. Until now...

*Peter Andre is staring into a mirror as his hair is coiffed with forensic precision by his elder brother, Michael. It's a scene entirely in keeping with the Warholian Andre image where every second is a photo-opportunity, every appearance a magazine cover. No stray hair is left to chance. But what Andre is saying is not what you'd expect to hear from this carefully constructed media package of a man.*

He is talking about the time his life completely imploded, when each day brought death threats and sweat-inducing horrors that ended finally - after narrowly escaping being stabbed in the street - when he checked himself into a mental institution.

'Something happened that changed me forever,' he says. 'I was in a bad place and was getting a lot of really bad abuse. There was nothing I could do but try to carry on living. One night I went out quite late to get something from a shop. As I was walking down the street I noticed a group of Middle Eastern guys. One broke away and grabbed me. He pushed me against a wall, stuck a knife to my throat and shouted, "Give me one good reason why I shouldn't kill you." I started hyperventilating, which seemed to excite the other guys. They started laughing.

'Another one took this blade out and ran it across my face. The first guy kept telling me I was the reason his brother was in hospital. I kept saying I had no idea what they were talking about but they told me to shut up. I was completely terrified. I could feel them getting off on my fear but I couldn't stop it. I closed my eyes and then I heard this woman I know running at me with her security. The gang legged it.

'Australia was a very bad place for me at the time. I'd gone from being this golden boy to a hate figure. I was getting death threats, people were texting me with my parents' address saying, "Say goodbye to them." It was horrendous.

'What happened after that was one panic attack after another. Crippling, terrifying. It got so extreme I was having up to 20 panic attacks a day. I couldn't cope. I couldn't work. I didn't



know what to do. I ended up checking myself into a psychiatric ward in New York. I spent two weeks there going to group therapy, talking to people. I was then discharged and put on seriously strong medication, which actually made me worse. It was a really bad time.'

This took place almost a decade ago, when Andre was in his first phase of stardom as a Nineties pop star. The breakdown was caused by the pressures of celebrity and he has just come through yet another celebrity meltdown: his break-up from that 21st-century force of publicity, Katie Price; but this time there has been no medication, no institutions.

Their split, like their meeting on *I'm A Celebrity... Get me Out Of Here!*, their wedding and the birth of their two children, Junior and Princess Tiaamii, took place in the spotlight of the press. And what wasn't covered in the newspapers or in glossy magazines was documented by their own TV programme, *Katie And Peter*. The fly-on-the-wall series relayed every intimate detail of their married life and helped Price amass more than £20 million in marketing deals.

In a surreal twist, when they split their show split, too, Price's show going

it alone on ITV, while Andre's remained loyal to ITV2. You have to wonder what sort of a person could cope with that situation. Here was a man prepared to dress as Prince Charming for his wedding (and accept a cheque for a reported £2 million from a magazine into the bargain), to sing toe-curling duets with his wife, yet putting up with Price telling the cameras (usually in front of him) that he 'was only famous because of me'.

It is only since Andre walked out on Price after six years together (five of them as a married couple) that this 36-year-old British-born, Australian-raised son of Greek Cypriot Jehovah's Witnesses has finally started to come out of the overpowering shadow cast by his former wife.

While Price reverted to her clubbing, flesh-flashing Jordan roots and slating her ex, Andre talked only of his distress at the breakdown of his marriage - and his concerns for his two children and Price's eldest child, the mentally and physically disabled Harvey. He has yet to reveal the exact reason he left Price but says it had nothing to do with stories about her relationship with horse trainer Andrew Gould.

'I wouldn't have walked out on a marriage because of a photo or one

incident,' he says. 'That isn't me. There have been times when I've been dying to tell the world what really happened, but I always think of my dad, who has counselled me to say nothing and to think of the damage it would do to our children.

'It took a lot of strength to walk away, but not in a million years would I walk back into that situation again. Harbours bitterness and anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. It's not the way I do things.'

Enlarge Peter: 'People think that I went into that marriage for fame, for money, for all the wrong reasons. None of it is true'

And he claims there's no woman in his life at the moment.

'I haven't slept with any woman since Kate. I'm not ready and it's not right. I do want a relationship at some stage but you can't just fling yourself into that sort of situation. That's madness.'

The aftermath of the split has been a revelation for Andre. Despite her attempts to grab the headlines, Price's stock has taken a dramatic fall. Andre, meanwhile, has seen a dramatic rise in his fortunes.

In the past few months he has signed deals worth £3 million for his own fragrance, *Unconditional*, as well as a slot as a reporter on *This Morning*, a new reality TV show and a return to his career as a singer. It is very apparent that Andre, the man, lost something of himself during his marriage to Price. In person what comes across is his honesty, his surprising emotional intelligence and his ability to face his demons head on.

His mental breakdown did not come post-Price but when Andre was a pin-up pop star with top-ten hits such as *Mysterious Girl*, when his dates were *Spice Girls* and *Dannii Minogue* and when he supported *Madonna* on stage. Andre's was a career that began in Australia when he signed his first record deal aged 17 and ended a decade later.

'It was all there: the world tours, the success in Europe, the women, the sex, the unbelievable amount of sex, and then it ended.

'Celebrity is a very strange thing. What happened to me is that I got really big and then it just turned on me. In Australia, people - guys particularly - absolutely hated me. It turned very nasty, going from snide comments in magazines to death threats. I couldn't understand why. I tried to bury my fears and run away from it all, but eventually it just all caught up with me