

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Cissy Houston on 'Remembering Whitney'

A mother's story of tears, joy, and her greatest love

(AP)—Cissy Houston has a few words, and a few more, for Bobby Brown.

In "Remembering Whitney," the mother of the late Whitney Houston writes that from the start she had

doubted whether Brown was right for her daughter. And she thinks that Whitney might not have ended up so "deep" into drugs had they not stayed together.

"I do believe her life would have turned out differently," Houston writes. "It would have been easier for her to get sober and stay sober. Instead she was with someone who, like her, wanted to party. To me, he never seemed to be a help to her in the way she needed."

"Remembering Whitney" came out last month, two weeks short of the first anniversary of Houston's death. She drowned in a hotel bathtub in Beverly Hills, Calif., at age 48. Authorities said her death was complicated by cocaine use and heart disease.

Houston said she has no contact with Brown and didn't see any reason to, not even concerning her granddaughter, Bobbi Kristina. She reaffirmed her comments in the book that Whitney Houston would have been better off without him. "How would you like it if he had anything to do with your daughter?" she asked.

Houston said she wanted the book published so the world would not believe the worst about her daughter. Cissy Houston, herself an accomplished soul and gospel singer who has performed with Elvis Presley and Aretha Franklin, describes Whitney as a transcendent talent and vivacious and generous

person known affectionately by her childhood nickname, "Nippy." But she acknowledges in the book that her daughter could be "mean" and "difficult" and questions at times how well she knew her.

"In my darkest moments, I wonder whether Nippy loved me," she writes. "She always told me she did. But you know, she didn't call me much. She didn't come see me as much as I hoped she would."

from her," Houston writes.

For years, Whitney's drug problems had been only a rumor to her mother, who writes that concerns expressed by record executive Clive Davis were kept from her by her daughter and others. But by 2005 she had seen the worst. Houston remembers a horrifying visit to the Atlanta home of Brown and Houston, where the walls and doors were spray-painted with

"big glaring eyes and strange faces." Whitney's face had been cut out from a framed family picture, an image Cissy Houston found "beyond disturbing." The next time Houston came to the house, she was joined by two sheriff's deputies

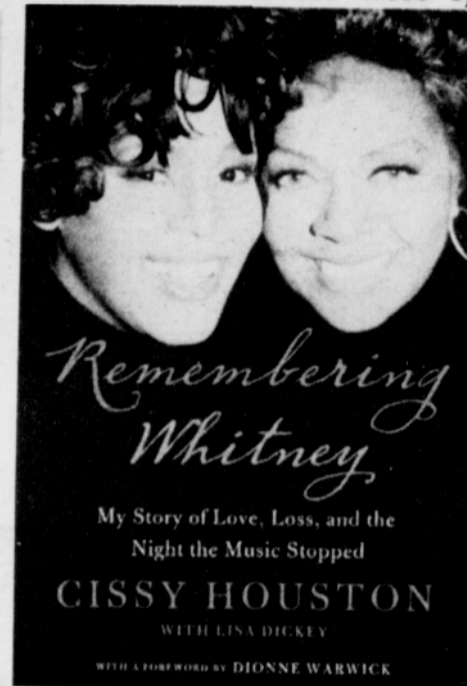
who helped her take Whitney to the hospital.

"She was so angry at me, cursing me and up and down," she writes. "Eventually, after a good long while, Nippy did stop being angry at me. She realized that I did what I did to protect her, and she later told people that I had saved her life."

Brown and Whitney Houston divorced in 2007, after 15 years of marriage. When she learned that her daughter was leaving Brown, Cissy Houston was "extremely relieved" and "thanking God so much I'm sure nobody else could get a prayer in to Him."



Cissy Houston



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