

#1 *NEW YORK TIMES*
BESTSELLING AUTHOR

IYANLA
VANZANT
ONE DAY MY
SOUL JUST
OPENED UP

40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS
TOWARD SPIRITUAL STRENGTH
AND PERSONAL GROWTH

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One Day



My Soul Just



Opened Up



Iyanla Vanzant



40 Days and 40 Nights

Toward Spiritual Strength

and Personal Growth



ATRIA BOOKS

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This book is dedicated to Ego, that part of us that continues to worry, lives in doubt, is afraid, judges other people, is afraid to trust, needs proof, believes only when it is convenient, fails to follow up, refuses to practice what it preaches, needs to be rescued, wants to be a victim, beats up on “self,” needs to be right all of the time, and continues to hold on to what does not work.

You are now put on notice that ...

YOUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED!



Acknowledgments

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My children: Gemmia Vanzant, who gave me the title. Damon Vanzant, who is free at last! Nisa Vanzant, who is in the process of opening her soul and answering the call.

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And my life partner and best friend, Adeyemi Bandele.

Thank you all for making another journey worthwhile.



One day my soul just opened up
and things started happenin'
things I can't quite explain
I mean
I cried and cried like never before
I cried tears of ten thousand mothers
I couldn't even feel anything because
I cried 'til I was numb.

One day my soul just opened up
I felt this overwhelming pride
what I was proud of
only God knows!
Like the pride of a hundred thousand fathers
basking in the glory of their newborn sons
I was grinnin' from ear to ear!

One day my soul just opened up
I started laughing
and I laughed for what seemed like forever
wasn't nothin' particularly funny goin' on
but I laughed anyhow
I laughed the joy of a million children playin'
in the mud
I laughed 'til my sides ached
Oh God! It felt so good!

One day, my soul just opened up
There were revelations, annihilations, and resolutions
feelings of doubt and betrayal, vengeance and forgiveness
memories of things I'd seen and done before
of places I'd been, although I didn't know when
there were lives I'd lived
people I'd loved
battles I'd fought
victories I'd won
and wars I'd lost.

One day, my soul just opened up
and out poured all the things
I'd been hiding
and denying
and living through
that had just happened moments before.

One day, my soul just opened up
and I decided
I was good and ready!
I was good and ready
to surrender
my life
to God.

So, with my soul wide open,
I sat down
wrote Her a note
and told her so.

Gemmia L. Vanzant



Removing the Veil

At one point in my life, I really thought I had it all figured out. I was working in my dream career field. I had a decent home. I was in a solid relationship. My children were being normal teenagers. Then, one morning I woke up miserable. Nothing in particular had happened. Well, actually it had. Sometime during the night, when I was asleep, I decided to tell myself the truth. I hated my job. I was lonely living in a new city where I knew no one. I was dating a married man. And I felt like I had been a horrible mother, totally incapable of ever making up to my children for the years of insanity I had inflicted upon them. People looking from the outside in thought that I had really made it! Who was I to doubt them? I convinced myself through my daily motions that they were right.

The feelings of misery, confusion, and despair began to grow like an annoying fungus in my mind. My thinking was fuzzy. I was snapping at people. I had become professionally aggressive and competitive to the point of being combative. Each day, I would push myself to exhaustion so that no more truth could be, would be, revealed to me when I was sleeping. I clung to the relationship believing that if it ended, I would surely lose my mind. It did. And I did. I lost the mind that had kept me in denial for the better part of my life. I lost the mind that was so full of distortions, half-truths, and the ideas of others that it fed my misery like a ravenous dog. I lost the mind that was angry at my mother, hated my father, resented my brother, wanted to control everything and everybody in its midst that could in any way hurt me. At the time, I didn't realize what was going on. I thought I was having a string of