



SETTLED: Ellen with new love Portia

By **ROBIN MIZRAHI**

# Ellen reveals hidden agony over how her stepdad molested her

**F**unny lady Ellen DeGeneres has broken her 30-year silence about the sexual abuse she suffered as a teenager. "I had a situation with my stepdad when he molested me," the talk show host revealed.

Ellen's ordeal occurred when she was 17 and living in Texas with her mother Betty and her mother's third husband, salesman Roy H. Grussendorf. The abuse took place right after her mother underwent a mastectomy due to breast cancer.

In a recent interview Ellen, 47, recalled how she kicked out a window to escape her tormentor's clutches.

Said Ellen: "My mother's husband said he felt a lump in her other breast. But he didn't want to alarm her so he needed to feel mine so he could compare. He made me lie down and I let him feel my breasts. A few weeks later, he tried to do it again, and I kept saying, 'No! You can't keep doing this!'"

"One night he tried to break down the door to my bedroom... I had to kick a window out and escape. I felt like an idiot because I should have known better."

Ellen said she came forward because she feels it's important for teenage girls to learn that there are different ways to say "no" to their abusers. Ellen also feels that her cautionary tale supports her optimistic outlook on life.

"Someone once told me that a broken heart leaves cracks so that the light can come in. I feel like it did that for me," said Ellen.

Grussendorf - whom Ellen pointedly refers to as her mother's hus-

band instead of calling him her stepfather - is dead now. But Ellen is still affected by what he did to her, enough to bring tears to her eyes when she talks about it.

Ellen said: "I was trying to protect my mom instead of myself."

"She had just gotten married, had breast cancer, and to tell her horrible things her husband was doing to me

- I thought it would devastate her.

"But when you're a teen, there are always different circumstances and it's important for teenage girls to hear that there are different ways to say no. And if it ever happens to them, they should tell someone right away."

A friend noted that Ellen has flourished since her troubled childhood.

Said the friend: "She's always been in love she hopes will last. Being abused by a man to your mother isn't so just put away and forget."

"Ellen is a very kind, loving person. Just look at her romantic life. She's always been in a long-term relationship."

