

ISSUE #74
2023

A full-length portrait of Marion Skinner, a Black man with a beard and mustache, wearing dark sunglasses, a white dress shirt, and a dark blue pinstripe suit jacket with a gold pocket square. He is smiling and has his hands clasped in front of him.

MARION SKINNER

+ *Shomari Love. Carson Barnes.*

Damien Escobar. War of the Sexes.

#SnowfallFX.



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Greetings,

Let me first start off by saying that burnout is indeed real and sometimes, you have to take a step back to regroup and make sure that both your mental and physical health is on point. That makes for better productivity overall. With that being said, we are BACK!

I want to thank everyone who has stayed down with us over the years. We have a lot planned for the remainder of the year.

In the meantime, check us out at www.twenty4sevenmagazine.com for the latest news, interviews and other great content.

Tyrone Davis

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CONTENTS

CARSON BARNES	7
MARION SKINNER	8-11
#SNOWFALFX	13
SHOMARI LOVE	14-15
WAR OF THE SEXES	16
DAMIEN ESCOBAR	17

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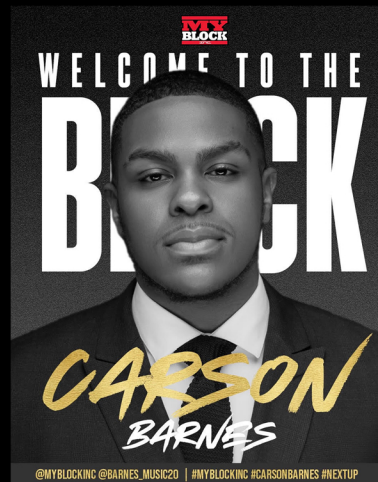
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During an unprecedented sold-out event this past Easter Sunday at The Kennedy Center, multi-award winning producer-songwriter, Warrryn Campbell, made the announcement that the emerging 19-year-old singer-songwriter, CARSON BARNES, will be joining the My Block Inc. family as the latest signee to the platinum award-winning record label.

"I've dreamed of this moment for as long as I can remember, and now I can say, 'God did it for me!' To be here at 19 years old is mind-blowing and to be part of a family/label such as My Block Inc. seems so surreal! Having the opportunity to be surrounded by some of the greatest and most talented people in this industry is an absolute honor," mentions Carson. "I understand this journey won't be easy, but with God, my family, and this My Block family, I'm certain we will win souls for Christ through the music God will allow me to create. Thank you, Warrryn, for taking a chance on me. It's go time!" he adds.

"I'm very excited to have Carson added to the roster. We [My Block Inc.] have some of the most premier music artists in the world, and he's next on deck! With his youth, skill level, and what he can do, he has the ability within him to move the needle forward in gospel music and create something fresh and new for the next generation. I think he'll be the next voice, the next Donnie McClurkin, the next main staple that people actually look to and say, 'Oh yeah, that's what gospel music sounds like.' So I'm excited to work with him. I'm excited to present Carson to the world and curate this next new sound for the next generation of gospel music artists through him," shares Warrryn Campbell.

ABOUT CARSON BARNES:

Carson Barnes is a Chicago native, pastor's Kid, and youngest of three siblings, who knew at a young age he was in love with music. He began singing in his grandmother's youth choir, while also mastering the drums. He and his siblings created a singing group called C.M.C. (Carsie, Megan, Carson), which meant that music was around him at all times. From posting clips of his singing on social media to gaining the attention of Gospel greats and music industry influencers, the world has taken notice of his amazing talent and are very excited about his future.

Carson currently attends Prairie State College in Illinois and remains active in his father's church, Antioch Missionary Baptist Church South under the leadership of Pastor Carsie Barnes III. In his spare time, he enjoys playing basketball.

CONNECT WITH CARSON BARNES:

Instagram: @BARNES_MUSIC20

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Write up and photo courtesy of Ra-Fael Blanco at 2R's Entertainment & Media PR. Phone: 646.326.4803 | Email: Ra-Fael@2RsEntandMediaPR.com.

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PHOTOS:
RARI FILMS

MARION SKINNER

STAY FOCUSED

Words + Interview By Tyrone Davis

Marion Skinner is a businessman and serial entrepreneur who has created and been involved in several endeavors. He and I discussed the Texas Advancement Center, trades, technology and the future of robots, entrepreneurship, mental health and why it is important to stay focused.

Tell us about the Texas Advancement Center.

Absolutely. Texas Advancement Center is a career college based out of Texas. We have two locations in San Antonio and in Dallas. They do different career paths. They offer HVAC, Electrical, barbering, cosmetology, medical billing, medical assistant, computer IT, software developers, and a few different career choices.

What was the process like gaining the support of the state?

When I actually went into the deal with the Texas Workforce, their biggest thing was wanting to find students to actually go to different colleges but, they could never reach the demographic that they needed. That is when I came in and I was like, "At Texas Advancement Center, we're offering the trade and at the same time, I can reach the people." So, you know, that went hand in hand. From there, we became the number one target.

Congratulations on Texas Advancement Center getting acquired for over \$100 Million! This is major! Tell us about this exciting new acquisition and how it came to pass?

When the private equity firm actually came to me, they were trying to get into the education field and go through the number one career college in the state of Texas. There were a few different offers that were given but we did get the one that best suited us. It was bittersweet, just watching. It was almost like letting your baby go but I know it was for the better good.

The private equity firm made me a great offer and on top of that, I am now able to further partner with all the workforces around the US and assist other entrepreneurs who are trying to start their own career colleges all around at the same time.

What does this new acquisition represent for Texas Advancement Center moving forward?

The private equity firm acquiring the Texas Advancement Center will give them a bigger footprint within the state of Texas but will also allow them to launch the Georgia Advancement Center and the rights of Florida Advancement Center as well. So, they are able to expand off of everything that was already built. That is pretty much the direction of that.

Where did the name "King of Education" come from and why should our people take education more seriously?

The *King of Education* moniker derived from me just assisting so many students. Last year alone, we had over 400 students and since actually starting the college, we have helped a little over 1,200 students altogether. All of those students received their tuition paid for free from the state. It's not anything that they have to pay back (no student loans), they don't have to deal with Sallie Mae or anything like that. They just got a free education.

So many students just started coming up to me, letting me know how I changed their life and how much this meant for them to actually just pick a career field that was actually in demand. The name just caught on.

Break down the ways that learning a trade can be beneficial.

A lot of people are actually going the trade route instead of going to a four-year college. One of the best things about it is even at a four-year college, what a lot of people are starting to realize is that you can go for accounting or you can major in

various things. Also, you can go to a trade school and get the same thing but at a much faster timeframe. So, what it takes some people to go to school for four years, you can go to a trade school and get your degree within less than a six months. On top of that, you can either get it for free, or you can get it at a much lower rate than you would pay at a four-year school.

Those are a lot of the benefits and then we are talking about trades. We are not talking about trades that are not in demand that you don't make any money from. We are talking about fields that are in demand and when you come out, you make money immediately. That is especially with the CDL drivers, they're coming out instantly making \$80,000 a year with their CDL. Based upon different jobs and things like that, you'd come straight out of college with loans that you'd have to pay back. It just makes the most sense to go the trade route.

What made you pursue that endeavor (Texas Advancement Center) in particular?

I had a trucking company at the time, then all my drivers kept telling me how they got their CDL through the state. They didn't have to pay for anything so at the time, I was thinking what if I did that partnership with them and I was training my own drivers then I would keep the drivers for myself at the same time. Enough of them kept on saying it then one thing led to another and I had a full blown CDL school. I then just started adding different programs to it.

You'll be opening up a new location in Atlanta soon. Tell us about it.

Since that is under the *Advanced Centers of America* umbrella, Georgia Advancement Center is still going to be opening. I don't know their time frame on that right now because that is a separate entity now that I sold Texas Advancement Center, but I know it is still in the works and will be opening very soon.

With all of the talk about human beings being "replaced" by robots in the future and being someone who has done well in the trucking business, what are your thoughts about things becoming more automated?

If we are not too careful, we will find ourselves out of a lot of jobs, especially in our community. What is going to happen is we are going to automate so many different things, like cashiers and truck drivers. There are a lot of things right now that are

great ideas, of course with moving technology forward but the moment that technology replaces humans is when those fears start to come in.

Those are just things that we have to continue to think about. I'm all for forward thinking but at the same time, it will hurt us. So, we have to be mindful of that and continue to educate ourselves and stay on top of it. If we don't and let things keep happening the way that they are, we are going to look up and a lot of our jobs will be raided.

People on social media have led others to believe that entrepreneurship is the way for everyone. In your opinion,

what is the biggest misconception about becoming a successful entrepreneur?

Well, let me start by saying it is definitely not for everyone. I had a lot of companies that I created. However, a lot of people only know about the ones that were successful. With that being said, entrepreneurship is very similar to Instagram. You only talk about the highlights of your life and that is why people have to realize that entrepreneurship is very hard. More people stop and give up rather than keep going.

I would just say for entrepreneurs out there who may start to second guess themselves on their decisions, you just have to stay consistent because you never know when that change or big break is going to happen.

Personally, what are 3 things you've had to do on a daily

basis to keep the ball rolling?

Read audiobooks. Every morning there are business books that will continue to help me stay focused. Reading is something I'm very big on. Also, I always try to listen to my staff or my employees that are around me because sometimes you will start getting in your own zone and forget the people that helped you build and create the things that you have. Those things got you to the place that you are in. So, it is really important to always listen to the staff and having staff meetings as well. The third thing I would say is to try to stay focused. I always try to stay focused on everything that is around me.

As someone who has had a lot going on for some time now, how do you manage your mental health?

One thing that I am always doing is praying. I also try to check on everybody in my circle and keep the right people around me. That is one of the biggest things with mental health. Sometimes, we have the wrong people around us who don't check in on us and aren't real friends that actually care about our wellbeing. I have the right people around me and I try to be the right person for those people as well.

Going back a bit, where are you from originally and how did you grow up?

Originally, I'm from Wilmington, Delaware. It is rough out there. My mom moved us to Texas so that we would have a better chance at life. Delaware is actually the only state where you cannot achieve the American dream. That is how crazy it actually is. Getting away from violence and poverty was so important.

What did you learn about yourself while pursuing your degree in audio engineering and how did that change you moving forward?

My audio engineering degree just gave me another opportunity. Honestly, that is what I needed. It is not necessarily that I needed a degree. I just needed another avenue to get into the music industry. A lot of people don't talk about the engineers on certain songs so I knew if I could just sneak my way into audio engineering then I could actually start producing for a lot of these artists. But, the main thing was getting into the door.

The music industry has changed quite a bit over the years and while many are thriving, many are not. A lot of entertainers are having to diversify their businesses in order to keep the money flowing in. What caused you to pivot when you did and how did that go the first few years?

So, when I actually pivoted from the music industry, I kind of figured it was gonna start switching up, just based upon technology. Technology was one of those things that gave anyone and everyone the opportunity to create a studio, no matter where they were at. So, we had people starting studios in their basements, closets and pantries. I knew at that point that the industry was going to change. It was just a matter of time. So by me being a thinker and getting ahead of the game, it put me into the right spot. I actually did it at a decent time while the industry was still changing and going through that switch but I was still able to capture that time.

What did you love most about producing and do you still make music today?

No, I don't do it any more. I had to stop it. I love music but to be honest, I truly love marketing. So getting to artists, creating something from the ground up is my thing whether with the music industry one week, a sneaker company the next week or liquor company the following. Working on an album with a new artist that no one has ever heard of and then making sure that artist is known worldwide is my passion.

Who are your "Top 5" producers of all time?

I'm going to start with Pharrell and then I am going to go with Kanye. Then, we are going to go with Just Blaze, Timbaland, and Dr. Dre.

I'm going to throw a few names out there. Say whatever comes to mind.

A. The Middle Men

Between you and your next hit.

B. Rick Ross

A solid advisor and friend.

C. Espada

The smoothest tequila drink you would ever have.

What kind of advice can you give aspiring entrepreneurs?

Stay focused, stay focused, stay focused. Stay consistent and stay focused. That is the biggest thing you got to do. You never know when your break is coming.

Lastly, how can people reach you if they'd like to keep up with you and your endeavors?

Follow me on Instagram at @thekingofeducation. I'm really big on social media. I try to check all my DMs and answer everybody so please reach out as often as possible. I'm here to inspire everyone. You never know who is next. Everyone is someone so that is why I try to treat everyone the same.

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TWEET DAT!

@Lex_topia: its so fire to have a networking wingman. you be chilling shaking hands & here come the homie (super successful as well btw) to hype you up more than you ever would yourself lol

@freshkils: I will literally film myself burning a \$10 bill a month until this platform dies if this tweet gets 1000 likes

@AndreaSpeakz: Seems like they actually devalued the blue check by placing a price on it. Overnight... it lost its meaning & purpose. What is the value in having it now?

@sza: The unconscious need to be right is a form of violence.

@biancasiselle: getting home safe everyday is such a blessing

@Barolinnne: Some people deserve your silence more then they deserve your response

@wakaflocka: French fries on a cheese pizza with ketchup.. thank me later

@majornija: On the outside society is becoming more accepting and things are getting easier but on the inside it's making the people weaker and unable to survive what's next to come.

*ALL CONTENT HAS BEEN PUBLISHED EXACTLY HOW IT WAS WRITTEN. SUBMIT MATERIAL FOR THE "TWEET DAT" SECTION TO TWENTY4SEVENMAGAZINE@GMAIL.COM OR @TWENTY4SEVENMAG IN YOUR TWEETS.



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THE BARBERSHOP



#SNOWFALLFX

@Hthemagnificent: Damson Idris deserves every single award possible for his performance in Snowfall. That ending was powerful, tragic yet eerily realistic. Franklin Saint will go down as a forever classic character in a forever classic show. #SnowfallFX

@ZaysModernLife: I like the way they snuck in that "Boys in Da Hood" reference. #Snowfall #SnowfallFX

@MyLifeAsJ: All this nigga wanted was his money and everyone in his life decided he didn't deserve it back after living off him all these years. That's some BS man idc #SnowfallFX

@reefysinc: Most realistic ending I've ever saw in a tv show. #Snowfall #SnowfallFX

@Cap1talC: So what did we learn ladies & gentleman? If Michael Hyatt is your mother on a TV show, your absolutely fucked. #SnowfallFX

@HalfBlackieChan: That nigga Damson was acting his ass off #SnowfallFX

@Amin_Joseph: No one has portrayed a coming of age story on television as brilliantly as Damson Idris @DamsonIdris 30 years from now when some extremely gifted kid repeats this feat, it will remind us of Damson's inspiring performance and the secrets to his success. #SnowfallFX

@BeigeDynamite: Damson did his homework, cuz one thing OG winos is gonna do is pat you on the shoulder 30 times for no reason #SnowfallFX

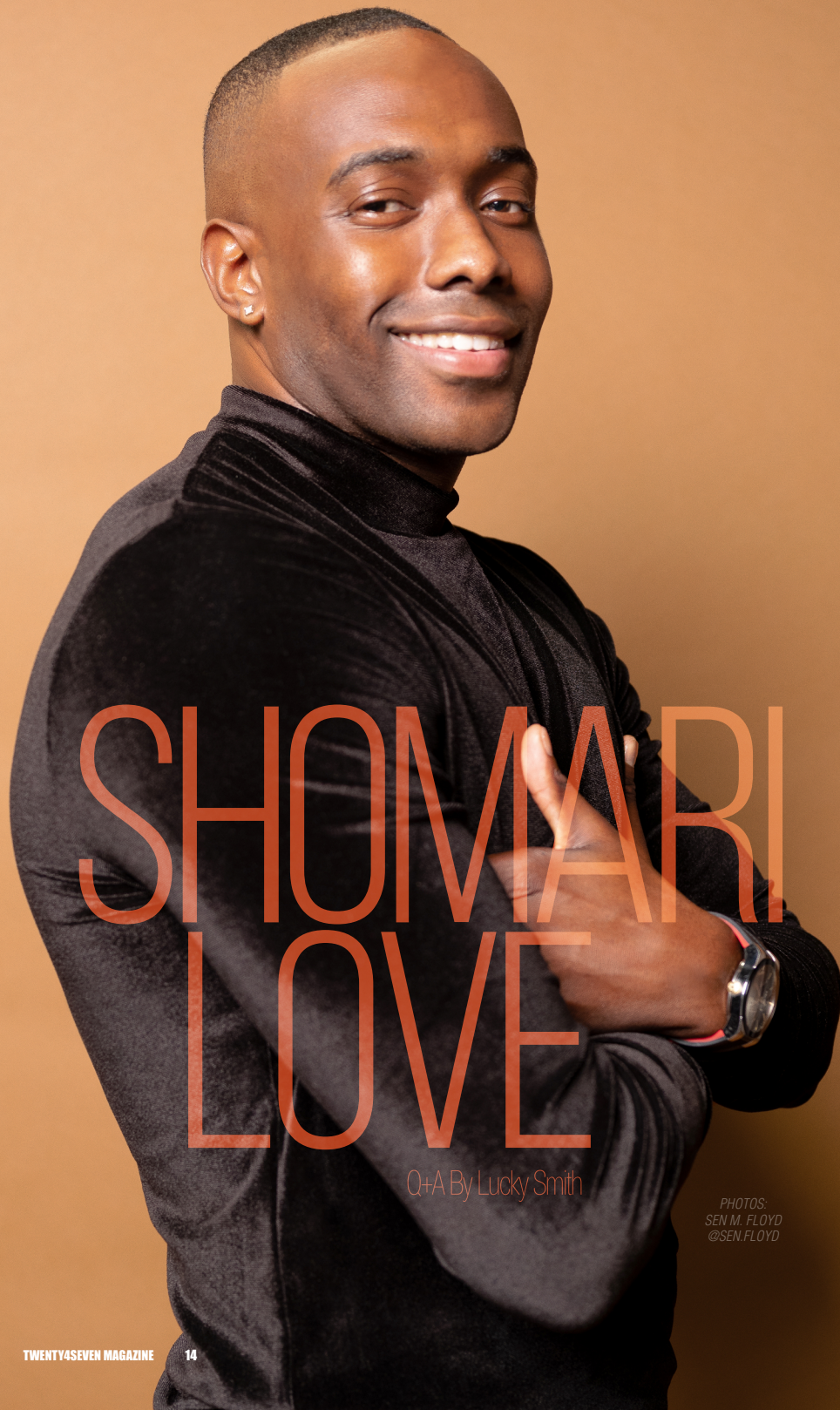
@Wrd2Allah: Franklin was fucked over by all 3 women in his life n you expect me to trust you hoes #Snowfall #SnowfallFX

@Christoph2012: You felt Franklin's spiraling anxieties; you felt Cissy's disappointment; you felt Leon's survivor's guilt; you felt Louie's fear—truly moving performances that deserve to be recognized. #SnowfallFX

@andron_dave: If you all wanna hear about some of the thinking that went into landing the #SnowfallFX plane. I promise you it was as hard to write as it was to watch, but in the end it couldn't have gone any other way.

@jalen_rose7: mann y'all held it down for 6 seasons. I was locked in for every single episode. a show has never grabbed my attention and maintained it this long and y'all had me for 6 straight. Job well done #Snowfallfx

@cultureelixir: Snowfall deserves so much more love! The show honestly deserves to be on lists alongside Breaking Bad and The Sopranos. #SnowfallFX



Q+A By Lucky Smith

PHOTOS:
SEN M. FLOYD
@SEN.FLOYD

First, we want to thank you for taking time out for us. Let's start by you describing what your childhood was like and what made you want to become an actor.

Thanks for having me. I was always a creative child. Sports and music helped me channel most of my creative energy growing up. That and my wild imagination. I always re-enacted Wesley Snipes, Denzel Washington, or Leonardo DiCaprio. I would watch so many different films and TV shows. I knew I that if others could do it, I would be able to if I tried.

It seems you have a comfort zone in the films you participate in. Do you look for certain types of roles? How do you know you are choosing the right projects?

I appreciate real stories and characters that people from different walks of life can relate to. Deciding if a project is right for me starts with the script. When the story is compelling it's usually a great sign.

What was your most embarrassing moment getting started as an actor as well as a high point that you'll never forget?

Thankfully, I don't have many embarrassing moments, but I have forgotten a line or two during a take. At first it seemed like the end of the world until I realized it happens to everyone at some point. The highest point was being able to learn from Forest Whitaker, Angela Basset, and the late Chadwick Boseman firsthand.

What was your experience like working on "The Chi" and how does TV differ from films?

Working on *The Chi* was one of my favorite jobs to date. There was a strong presence of community and collaboration. Depending on your capacity on a TV project, you could work longer shooting a full season than you would on a film. For the most part episodes are shot in chronological order, but the scenes in it may not be. I look at each episode like a short film.

You have a lead role in "Maya and Her Lover". Tell us about the film and your role as Kaseem.

This was an independent project powered by a lot of passion. We had a small, dedicated crew and a good script to work with. Kaseem is a troubled young man trying to find his way in life but can't help but to be guided by charm and passion.

We've seen a lot of debates online about age big gaps between couples. What is your take on that, considering your character is much younger than his mate?

I get how age can be a factor, but mainly as it relates to maturity levels and common interests. Kaseem was big on history and literature. This was a common ground for him and Maya since she was an avid reader and was well educated.

What type of life lessons could we learn from this film?

Lessons of self-worth, commitment, communication and being open minded.

Tell us about your role in the TV series "Kold & Windy".

I play the character Dirty. He's one of the members of Shelly Winters crew. He is an individual that has little remorse and would seize any opportunity presented to retaliate. Dirty's motive is clear, but the source of his rage is unknown.

Life has been crazy as of late. How has life been going for you post pandemic?

Constant adjustment. It doesn't really feel like it's over, but I have been grateful to get back to work and travel again.

Tell us about your role in the new film, "Take the Night".

I play Shannon, a former basketball star whose career was ended short by an injury. Since then, he's been running with a crew doing jobs to survive. In the film we see the pain from his past and his conviction to overcome his current circumstance.

Pranks, social media, etc. How do you feel about the state of society today consequently?

I'm not really into trends. I try not to spend too much time on social media. In moderation, it's resourceful and even entertaining but I feel society hyper consumes it.

We understand you wear various hats. What are they and how do they rank in your life and career?

I do, and I enjoy the challenge. It helps my mind stay active. When I'm not acting, I produce short film content, do some e-commerce work and work on building my real estate portfolio. I would love to spend my time equally, but my schedule fluctuates often.

Break down your relationship with golf.

I was introduced to golf in my sophomore of college when I began caddyng. I was always interested in the game, but it wasn't until I played my first practice round that I fell in love with it. It's the only game that you're truly up against yourself. It requires discipline, patience, and perseverance.

What advice would you give aspiring entertainer?

Start now, don't wait. Inaction is The biggest regret you can have. You'll learn far more from trying and failing than you will from not trying at all.

Follow Shomari Love on Instagram @ShomariLove.



WAR OF THE SEXES

By Brittany B.

There's an emergence of war between men and women. A power struggle in the household, if you will.

Western culture historically says that the man is the provider, the protector, the King of the Castle. Women stay home, raise the kids, and keep the house still pleasing her husband when he returns from a long day's work.

Do we still define the road to marriage with the same principals that our elders valued?

As a single woman dating in 2023, I want it all. First, I love making my own money. Setting the rules as I see fit sexually, in my choice of platonic friendships, how I run my household, and how my time is spent gives me a sense of incredible freedom.

But I long for fulfilling companionship with a man's man. He

supports my independence, sexes me good, and wants to take care of home because my hustle empowers his hustle while staying secure in who he is.

Seems impossible to achieve. Have women taken "Independent Woman" too far? Have men become too relaxed in the promiscuity of women's new freedom to continue to step up to the plate as men have done in the past?

Maybe both are true.

Men say they want an *Equal Partner*. The catch? Men also want to be King of the Castle. Does *Equal Partners* equate to *Equal Control* in sexual, financial & household expectations from both or create a War of the Sexes?

Follow Brittany B. on Instagram @baeinreallife.

CHECK ME OUT

DAMIEN ESCOBAR

TABOO



"TABOO" is the latest release from Emmy Award-Winning Violin Crooner, DAMIEN ESCOBAR. The beautifully played and composed song, serves as the lead single from Damien's upcoming album, to be released later this summer. "Liberation, freedom of expression. Taboo means something that is forbidden, but the word forbidden is based on someone else's standard of living. So everything that someone thinks is "taboo" that you do. This song is your anthem," shares Damien Escobar.

"TABOO" is globally available now on all streaming and download platforms, via the SRG-ILS Group label imprint. Escobar is letting it be known that his reign as the King of Strings will not cease.

ABOUT DAMIEN ESCOBAR

Hailed as one of the most influential and impactful violinists in modern history—two-time Emmy award-winning artist, Damien Escobar, has spent nearly two decades cementing his legacy as the "King of Strings". He's inspired listeners, broke barriers, and created a blueprint for other contemporary violinists who aspire to top the charts and make their way onto main stages around the world.

And his work is just getting started.

The Jamaica, Queens native who is known for his charisma, sincere humility, and undeniable talent—has always believed the key to his success is rooted in his humble beginnings. It is the main source that keeps him connected to his fans, and cultivates his unending love for performing. And if you've heard his story you know that Escobar's journey after Juilliard (from which he graduated at the age of 12) wasn't easy! But his passion and vision took him from playing for straphangers on NYC subways to serenading everyone from Oprah to the Obamas while achieving several lifetime goals in between— including an NAACP award nomination, billboard chart topping album releases, and sold out tours around the world. In 2022 Escobar introduced his "Life Out Loud" tour — an inspiring experience intended to affirm audiences to live authentically and unapologetically.

With an upcoming album slated to release later this summer, Escobar is on a mission to prove there's astonishing power in instrumental music and his intention is to motivate listeners and make an impact on mainstream music like never before.

CONNECT WITH DAMIEN ESCOBAR:

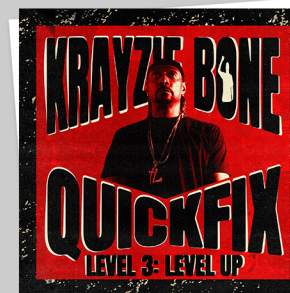
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