

OCTOBER '25 C

# THE CHRD

MAGAZINE



## MARCUS RODRIGUEZ

HOLLYWOOD'S NEXT TRIPLE  
THREAT: SINGER,  
SONGWRITER, DANCER, AND  
THE NEW FACE OF R&B.

## TAYLOR SWIFT

THE POP STAR POCKETED  
\$130 MILLION IN 1<sup>ST</sup> WEEK  
SALES. HOW?

## NINI IRIS

CAN'T BE CONTROLLED

SPECIAL FEATURE  
JET BLYTON

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by Jason Howard

## Unleashed: Nini Iris's Defiant Roar with "U CAN'T CONTROL ME"

There's a thrilling, palpable shift happening in pop music—a moment where glossy perfection is being traded for raw, unapologetic fire. And at the heart of this rebellion stands Nini Iris, an artist who is not just making music, but making a statement. Known for a unique sound that fuses Pop/Rock grit with Alternative Pop edge, Nini Iris is poised to drop her most defiant anthem yet: "U CAN'T CONTROL ME," hitting airwaves and playlists on Halloween, October 31st.

This isn't just another catchy track; it's the sonic embodiment of creative liberation.

### The Sound of Taking Back the Pen

Nini Iris has always carried an intriguing duality—a signature style that blends "old world" charm, a nod to her Tbilisi roots, with dark, aggressive pop overtones. But with "U CAN'T CONTROL ME," that intensity is channeled into a laser-focused narrative of self-assertion. Co-written by Nini Iris, Greer Baxter, and Chloé French, and sharply produced by Rami Bakhere, the single is a direct, high-energy response to a toxic professional dynamic.

Imagine being a brilliant creative, only to feel reduced to a 'puppet'—your vision diluted by someone who thinks they know better. This song captures that raw frustration and transforms it into a liberating explosion.

[Click here to find out full feature on Nini Iris](#)



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*“This song is the sound of me taking back my pen and my career,”*

*-Nini Iris*



*Taylor Swift*

Music Daily  
By Emily Jenson  
31 October, 2025

## How Taylor Swift Transformed an Album Launch into a Financial Empire

America's Sweetheart has just rewritten the economics of pop stardom. Taylor Swift—already a force of nature—didn't just release a new album; she orchestrated a cultural and financial explosion with her latest project, *Life of A Showgirl*.

The numbers are staggering: a reported \$130 million in revenue generated in the first week alone, spanning vinyl sales, streaming, traditional records, and an exclusive theatrical film. This isn't just a record; it's a financial masterclass. How did she pull off this tremendous, near-unprecedented feat? The answer lies in a meticulously coordinated strategy that monetizes every facet of her art and her fanbase's fierce dedication.

[Click here to find out full feature on Taylor Swift](#)

## The Multi-Variant Marketing Machine

The cornerstone of the historic first-week revenue wasn't just an album; it was dozens of albums. Swift's strategy of releasing a plethora of physical variants has become her signature weapon in the sales war, and she took it to an extreme with *Life of A Showgirl*.

- **The Collector's Hunt:** Reports indicate Swift released upwards of 34 versions of the album. This included nearly 30 physical editions—a mix of CDs, eight different vinyl LPs, and even a cassette.
- **Scarcity and Exclusivity:** Each variant often featured unique cover art, collectible bonus tracks, or exclusive content (like the "original songwriting memos" on certain digital copies). This manufacturing of scarcity compels dedicated fans—the "Swifties"—to buy multiple copies to complete their collections.

R&B IS BACK

# NICK LAVELLE

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# THE LAST OF THE INDEPENDENTS

Artist: LMARX

Interview by: Evelyn Marie

An Interview with LMARX: The New Sound  
of the Sunshine State

LMARX is the compelling new voice emerging from Florida's vibrant R&B scene. Blending the smooth, intimate stylings of contemporary rhythm and blues with a distinct regional sultry flavor, his music has begun to carve out a unique space in the crowded genre landscape.

LMARX recently sat down with us for an on and off camera interview. Look out for the full interview on our website and the video interview on our YouTube Channel.

CHRD: Florida R&B has a distinct feel, often blending classic soul with Trap or Dancehall rhythms from the Caribbean influences in the state. How has the specific culture and sonic landscape of Florida—from Miami to Jacksonville—shaped the core sound and lyrical themes of your music?

*LMARX: My R&B has that bounce, but there's still emotion and storytelling in it. Miami brings the rhythm, Jacksonville gives that grit, and I try to meet somewhere in the middle—smooth melodies over beats that still knock. While focusing on the art of storytelling about making love and also being loved on as well.*



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*For me, R&B has always been about emotion first – that real, honest passion you can feel - LMARX*  
”

[Click here to find out full feature on LMARX](#)

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# SEEING DOUBLE

**By Cameron Doherty**

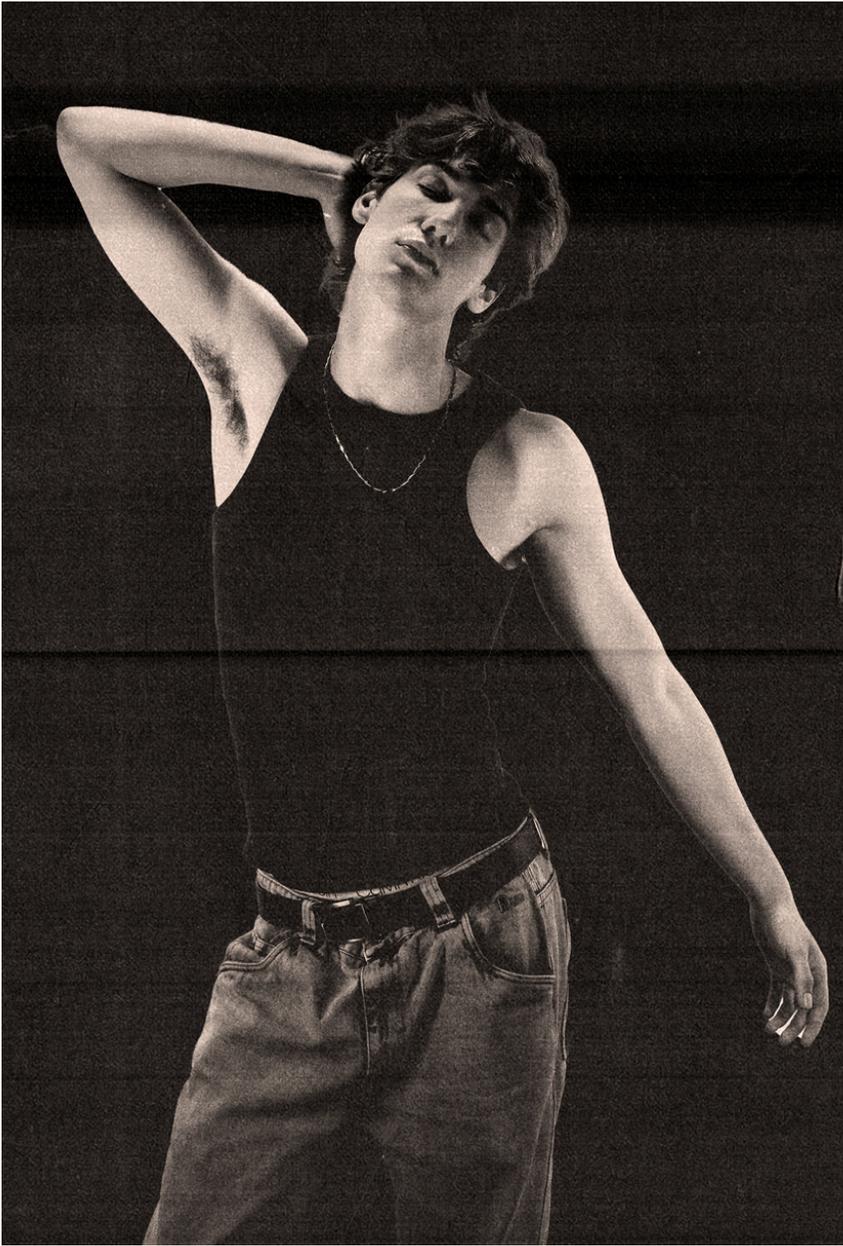
With *Double Vision Vol.2* landing this November, Jett Blyton is stepping into a new era. One that feels louder, sharper, and more sure of itself. The rising artist has been quietly building momentum, turning introspection into energy, and emotion into sound ever since his first full length body of work *SLEEP ON THE ALTAR* released in 2024.

Where Jett's earlier work has hinted at potential, this new chapter delivers and makes his potential undeniable.

There's a clarity to Jett's vision, a sense of control in the chaos. His songs spill out with a rare mix of confidence and honesty, the kind that makes you feel like you're catching someone mid-breakthrough.

Jett sat down with *CHRD Magazine* to talk evolution, duality, and what it really takes to keep your artistry intact when the noise gets louder.

# J E T T



*"It's kind of intentionally emotionally shallow, which sounds insane to say, but leaning into the cliché of it all was so much fun." – Jett Blyton*

CHRD: Double Vision Vol.2 feels like a continuation of the story. Where does this new chapter pick up emotionally and creatively for you?

*Jett: The ethos behind Double Vision has always been my love letter to pop, discovery of sound and paying homage to those before me. Emotionally, a lot of the songs feel singular in their approach, though somehow, I've ended up writing about a lot of parties for volume two and being in that altered state of mind-seeing double, if you will. It's kind of intentionally emotionally shallow, which sounds insane to say, but leaning into the cliché of it all was so much fun. It's a blaring synth project, with a major early 2010's energy throughout. Capital P Pop.*

CHRD: How has your sound or mindset evolved since Vol. 1?

*Jett: I am a completely different person! Everything is changing for me, and I feel a lot clearer about my creative vision and my future. I'm writing my best music right now. Lots of guitars. I can't wait for people to hear it.*

# B L Y T O N

## A SURPRISING START

CHRD: What was inspiring you during the writing and recording process for this EP? Were there particular moments, people, or even visuals that sparked it?

*Jett: During the recording process, I was inspired by Lady Gaga and Charli XCX. I think Charli XCX is one of the greatest artists of our time, and her music will age like wine. I was also inspired by, as aforementioned, the parties! I was going to a lot of parties when I was writing this and having so much fun. I think it rubbed off in the music.*



## A BORN ENTERTAINER

CHRD: Do you feel like Double Vision represents two sides of yourself, or is it more about sound and experimentation?

*Jett: Definitely more about sound and experimentation. I think it represents the funnest side of me though: when I'm at the pre's, three Aperol spritz' deep.*



There are singers, and then there are forces of nature. Georgia Black, the alternative R&B powerhouse hailing from North London, firmly belongs in the latter camp. With a voice as rich and commanding as a vintage Merlot, she's not just performing—she's holding court.

Inspired by the ultimate queens of command—the dramatic flair of Shirley Bassey, the raw grit of Etta James, and the cool elegance of Peggy Lee—Georgia has synthesized these iconic voices into something utterly her own. It's a sound that's both an immediate throwback and fiercely contemporary, blending her deep roots in Jazz, Blues, and Soul with sleek, modern production.

Georgia's career didn't just start; it exploded onto the scene. She first captivated the crowds as the frontwoman for Agent Provocateur's show-band, Dirty Stop Out. Sharing stages with rock legends like The Clash's Mick Jones and Primal Scream's Bobby Gillespie, she honed a stage presence that could fill venues from Camden's KOKO to the glittering spectacle of Vienna's Life Ball and Berlin Fashion Week.

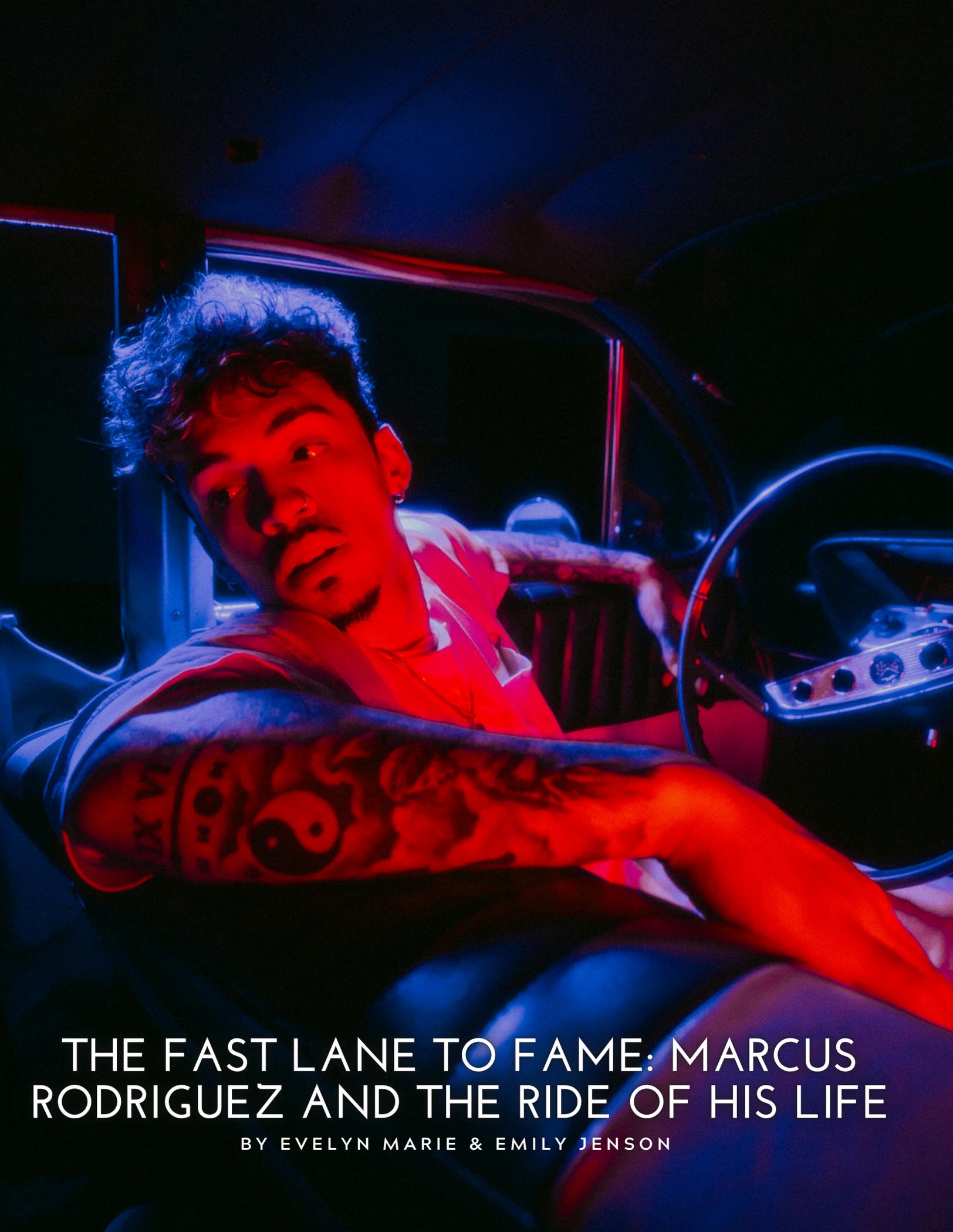
## Trending Topic

### Georgia Black

**"Way beyond her beauty, the vocals of Georgia Black stand out just as much. The "rugged smoothness" of her voice (if that makes sense) immediately draws you in. It makes you want to hear her and learn more."**

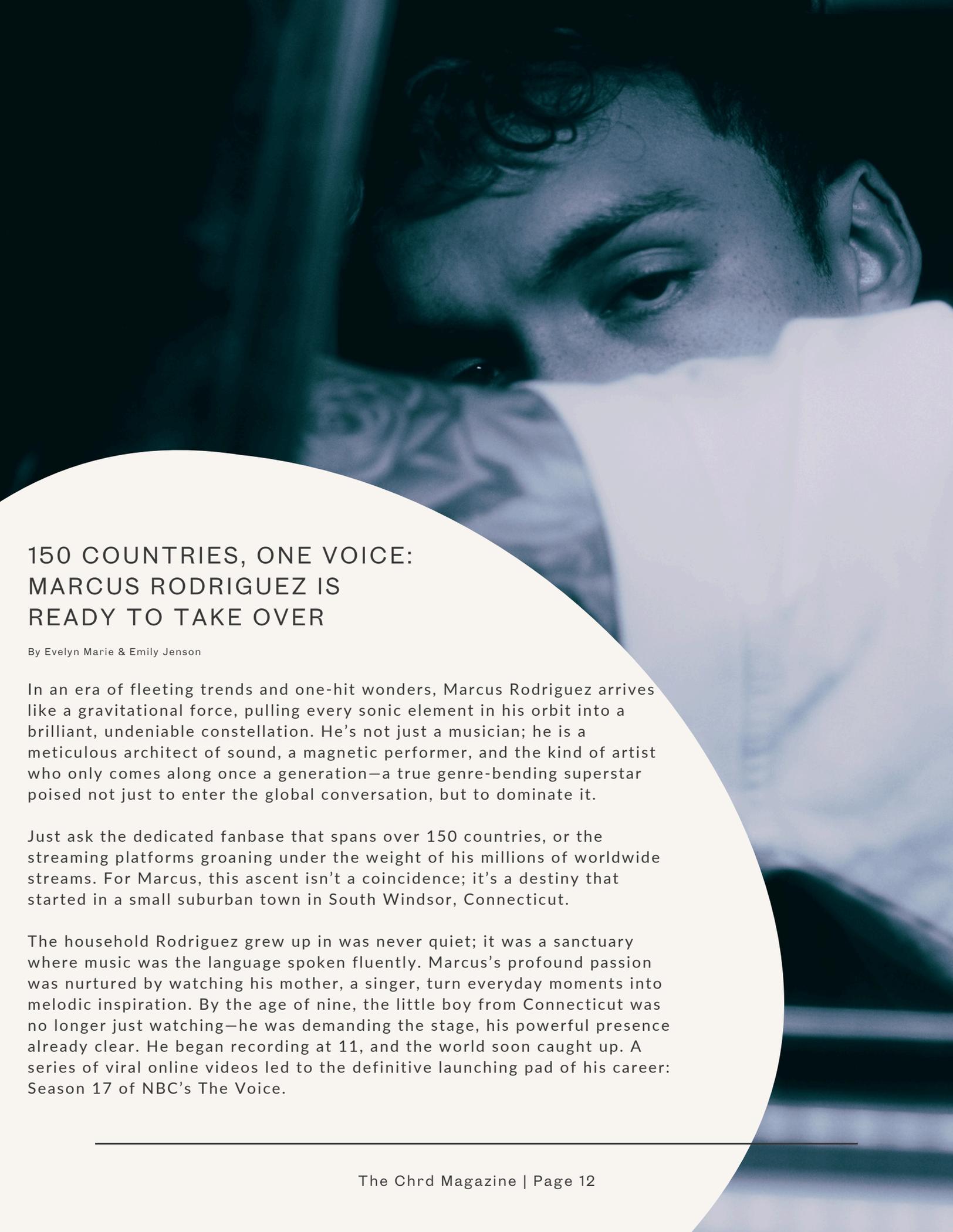
**EMILY JENSON**

[FIND OUR RECENT ARTICLE ON GEORGIA BLACK HERE](#)



# THE FAST LANE TO FAME: MARCUS RODRIGUEZ AND THE RIDE OF HIS LIFE

BY EVELYN MARIE & EMILY JENSON



## 150 COUNTRIES, ONE VOICE: MARCUS RODRIGUEZ IS READY TO TAKE OVER

By Evelyn Marie & Emily Jenson

In an era of fleeting trends and one-hit wonders, Marcus Rodriguez arrives like a gravitational force, pulling every sonic element in his orbit into a brilliant, undeniable constellation. He's not just a musician; he is a meticulous architect of sound, a magnetic performer, and the kind of artist who only comes along once a generation—a true genre-bending superstar poised not just to enter the global conversation, but to dominate it.

Just ask the dedicated fanbase that spans over 150 countries, or the streaming platforms groaning under the weight of his millions of worldwide streams. For Marcus, this ascent isn't a coincidence; it's a destiny that started in a small suburban town in South Windsor, Connecticut.

The household Rodriguez grew up in was never quiet; it was a sanctuary where music was the language spoken fluently. Marcus's profound passion was nurtured by watching his mother, a singer, turn everyday moments into melodic inspiration. By the age of nine, the little boy from Connecticut was no longer just watching—he was demanding the stage, his powerful presence already clear. He began recording at 11, and the world soon caught up. A series of viral online videos led to the definitive launching pad of his career: Season 17 of NBC's *The Voice*.



The Voice provided the spotlight, but Marcus provided the blinding light. That platform showcased the compelling combination that defines him: a powerful, soulful vocal delivery paired with a stage presence so effortlessly captivating, it felt star-struck even through the screen. While the show provided the catalyst, Rodriguez's subsequent success has been driven by something far more authentic than reality TV buzz: a deep, intimate connection with his audience, built one genuine note at a time. He isn't just performing for the crowd; he's sharing a journey with them.

That journey hit its most profound peak in October 2025 with the release of his first complete musical installment, the album, **THE BREAKTHROUGH (DELUXE)**.

Hailed as his most insightful work to date, the album is less a collection of songs and more a spiritual and artistic evolution captured within the narration of his personal life between the ages of 18 and 23.

Working alongside the innovative production duo Blurry Vizzion, Marcus crafted an engaging, cohesive sound that seamlessly merges R&B and Pop. This is where his sonic genius truly shines: the production is rich and inviting, blending modern electronic beats with traditional acoustic elements, all while his signature smooth vocal delivery glides over the top, showcasing an impressive emotional range.

**“THE BREAKTHROUGH is a 40 minute meditative experience that I hope everyone who presses play can feel; even if they aren't aware of what exactly it is that they're feeling.”**

**MARCUS RODRIGUEZ**

# MARCUS RODRIGUEZ CON'T

By Evelyn Marie & Emily Jenson

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*I wanted to be like Michael Jackson and Usher and Chris Brown. I wanted to make a name for myself,*

Marcus Rodriguez

Lyrically, *The Breakthrough* delves into the universal experiences we all navigate: love, heartbreak, lust, self-discovery, and resilience. It's this lyrical honesty that cemented his reputation for creating an intimate, shared experience with his listeners, turning personal vulnerability into global connection. The project wasn't just a hit; it was a cultural moment, earning Rodriguez the well-deserved title of "Top 10 artist of the year 2024" by Hot 93.7. It represented a seismic shift—a clear signal of a new, creatively dominant era.

But for an artist like Marcus Rodriguez, standing still is not an option. He is now capitalizing on the monumental momentum of *The Breakthrough* as he prepares to launch his next highly-anticipated album this Fall. This new project isn't just an encore; it is the centerpiece of a major career trajectory designed to explore and solidify his unique multinational sound.



**“You have to allow yourself to be a vessel and an instrument to something beyond the physical. My best melodies, lyrics and songs come from being in that flow state.”**

**MARCUS RODRIGUEZ**

Rodriguez's genius lies in his ability to effortlessly fuse disparate genres into a harmonious whole. Imagine the sultry smoothness of Pop-R&B, the rhythmic punch of Hip Hop, the infectious vitality of Dance Hall, and the passionate flow of Latin Music—all coalescing under one artist. This new album promises to be the definitive mission statement for that unique blend. It's a sound built for stadiums in Miami, nightclubs in Tokyo, and radio waves in London.

Beyond the music, Marcus's full résumé—spanning his work as a singer, songwriter, dancer, and actor—confirms that he is a complete entertainer, ready for the multi-platform demands of modern stardom. He possesses the vocal talent, the creative depth, and the undeniable international appeal required to be the face of the next generation of global R&B superstars.

This Fall 2025 album is more than a release; it's a promise. It's the soundtrack to his permanent ascent, ensuring that the name Marcus Rodriguez will soon be synonymous with music that is as diverse, dynamic, and dominant as his burgeoning empire.



[www.fallonarielle.com](http://www.fallonarielle.com)



## Streaming **NOW**

RPG Shad is quickly becoming one of the most compelling voices emerging from the Atlanta scene, distinguished by a lyrical depth that lives up to his self-proclaimed mission: **Real People Helping Each Other Grind**. With his recently released melodic single "Call Me Up"—a track that showcases his ability to blend vulnerable storytelling with infectious energy—Shad has set a high bar for his highly anticipated EP, he sat down with The Chrd Magazine for an exclusive interview covering his creative process.

**CHRD:** Your new single "Call Me" showcases a more melodic and vulnerable side of your artistry, dealing with themes of being a steadfast confidant for a loved one. Was the decision to open up this emotional lane deliberate, and how does this new vulnerability connect with the "street-smart lyricism" your core fanbase is accustomed to?

**RPG SHAD:** *It's something that everybody can relate to that been through it some point in their life, dealing with love and heartache, and it shows that men are very emotional as well, but it's afraid to show it. This track shows that a man can show sympathy in love.*

**CHRD:** The title of your upcoming 2026 EP, *The Darkside*, suggests an exploration of deeper, perhaps heavier themes. What is the central narrative or emotional space you're inviting listeners into with this project, and how does it represent an evolution from your previous work?

**RPG SHAD:** *It represents my darkest side and is deeper into thought of my lyrics and expression in pain through music to show the world how deep it can really get in my dark side.*

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(Vibe)

VOL. 01 WINTER 2025 RETRO BEAUTY

AESTHETIC VIBE PHOTOGRAPHY  
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LOVE

The music industry is currently navigating a period of rapid, tech-driven transformation. While digital streaming maintains its dominance, two fundamental forces are now reshaping the core business:

Let's talk about it.

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# Today's Industry



By: Evelyn Marie

## The Generative AI Revolution in Music Creation

The integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the most disruptive current trend, fundamentally changing how music is made and consumed. AI tools can now instantly generate complex melodies, beats, and even realistic vocal tracks from simple text prompts, democratizing high-quality production and allowing non-musicians to create music. However, this has ignited a fierce debate over copyright and compensation, with artists and rights holders demanding legal clarity and protection against AI models being trained on their work without fair payment, fearing a devaluation of human creativity and a loss of income.

## The Crisis of Streaming Compensation & Fan-Centric Models

Despite streaming platforms generating the vast majority of music industry revenue, the current "pro-rata" payment model—where all subscription money is pooled and distributed based on market share—results in incredibly low per-stream payouts for the vast majority of artists. This structural issue has fueled a crisis of sustainability for working musicians, leading to major platforms experimenting with "fan-centric" or "user-centric" payment models.

## The Vinyl Revival and the Collectability Factor

In an era dominated by digital files, physical music formats are experiencing a remarkable resurgence, with vinyl records leading the charge. Sales of LPs have consistently grown for over a decade, driven not just by nostalgic audiophiles but increasingly by Gen Z collectors who value the superior sound quality, the tangible nature, and the aesthetic appeal of album artwork.

**ALL TOPICS CONTIUED HERE**



LINDA LIPS

**LINDA**  
**LIPS**  
MAKEUP BRAND

COMING

2026



# THE ULTIMATE LIST OF WINTER '26 ESCAPES

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By Evelyn Marie

Photographs by Pat Santos

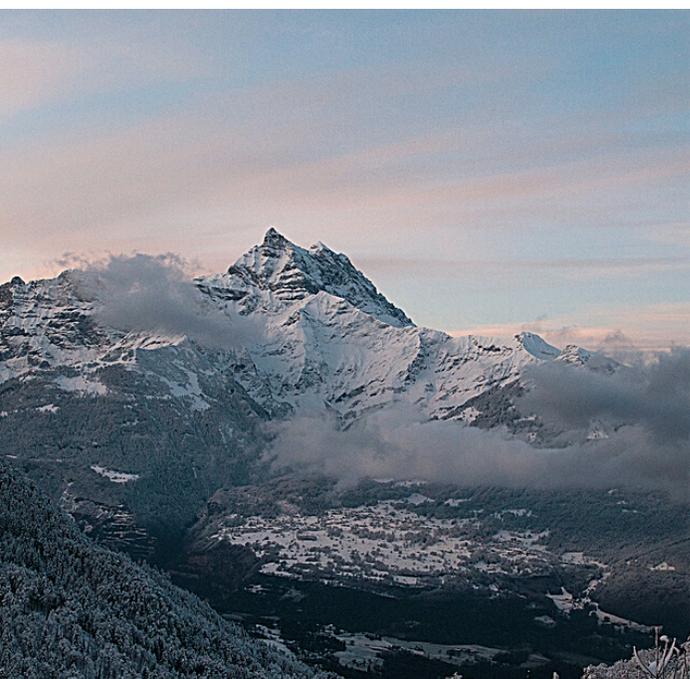
## The Quiet Season: 5 Winter Destinations to Ignite Your Creative Fire

For creatives—musicians, filmmakers, writers, and designers—winter can be the most productive time of the year. The traditional touring seasons and summer festival chaos subside, offering a precious window for deep focus, collaboration, and inspiration.

1. Banff, Alberta, Canada  
Banff offers the ultimate secluded mountain retreat, perfect for songwriters and screenwriters needing to escape the city noise. The primary professional draw is the renowned Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, which hosts intensive winter residencies for composers, writers, and visual artists. This environment provides dedicated, distraction-free studios and valuable opportunities for collaboration and critique with established mentors.

2. Lisbon, Portugal  
Lisbon provides a warm, culturally rich, and affordable European base for artists seeking international inspiration and networking without intense winter snow. Professionally, musicians should tap into the local Fado and World Music Scene—Lisbon is the heart of Fado and a major hub for African and Brazilian sounds, allowing for unique, cross-cultural collaboration and performance spaces. Beyond music, the city is a burgeoning tech and creative hub with numerous affordable coworking spaces, making it easy for digital artists and producers to connect with entrepreneurs in the Coworking & Startup Culture.

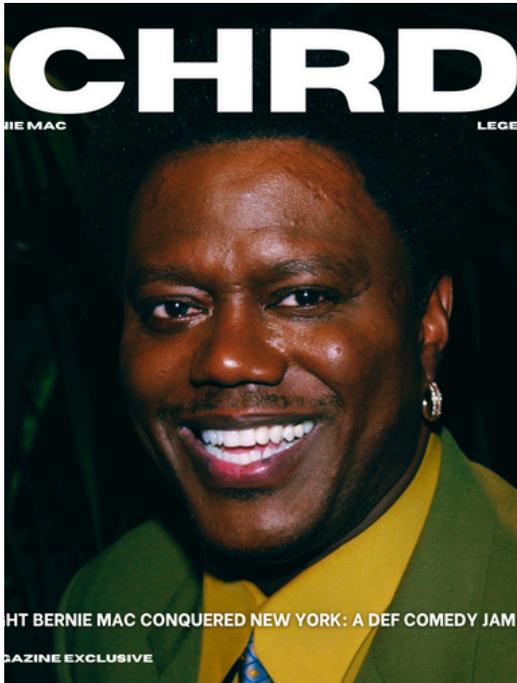
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THE CHR D  
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ART  
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## THE MOMENT THE WORLD WATCHED: SINÉAD O'CONNOR'S ELECTRIC SHOCK ON SNL

# FLASHBACK

ICONIC MOMENTS IN MUSIC THAT HAPPENED THIS MONTH.

OCTOBER 3, 1992 WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A STANDARD NIGHT OF SKETCH COMEDY AND MUSICAL PERFORMANCE ON NBC'S SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE. INSTEAD, IT BECAME A MOMENT THAT INSTANTLY REDEFINED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CELEBRITY, PROTEST, AND LIVE TELEVISION. ON THAT NIGHT, IRISH SINGER SINÉAD O'CONNOR, ALREADY A GLOBAL STAR KNOWN FOR HER SHAVED HEAD, INTENSE SINCERITY, AND CHART-TOPPING HIT "NOTHING COMPARES 2 U," DELIVERED A STUNNING ACT OF DEFIANCE THAT CONTINUES TO BE ANALYZED AND DEBATED DECADES LATER.

O'CONNOR'S SCHEDULED APPEARANCE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE HER THEN-NEW ALBUM. FOR HER SECOND SONG, SHE CHOSE A SOLEMN, A CAPPELLA RENDITION OF BOB MARLEY'S "WAR," SUBSTITUTING SOME OF THE LYRICS TO FOCUS ON CHILD ABUSE RATHER THAN RACIAL INJUSTICE. THE PERFORMANCE WAS RAW AND EMOTIONALLY GRIPPING, SHOWCASING HER UNDENIABLE VOCAL POWER.

THE PLANNED CLIMAX OF THE PERFORMANCE, HOWEVER, WAS A SECRET KNOWN ONLY TO HER.



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