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YOUNG & MODERN

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blabs about bossing boys and owning Singled Out

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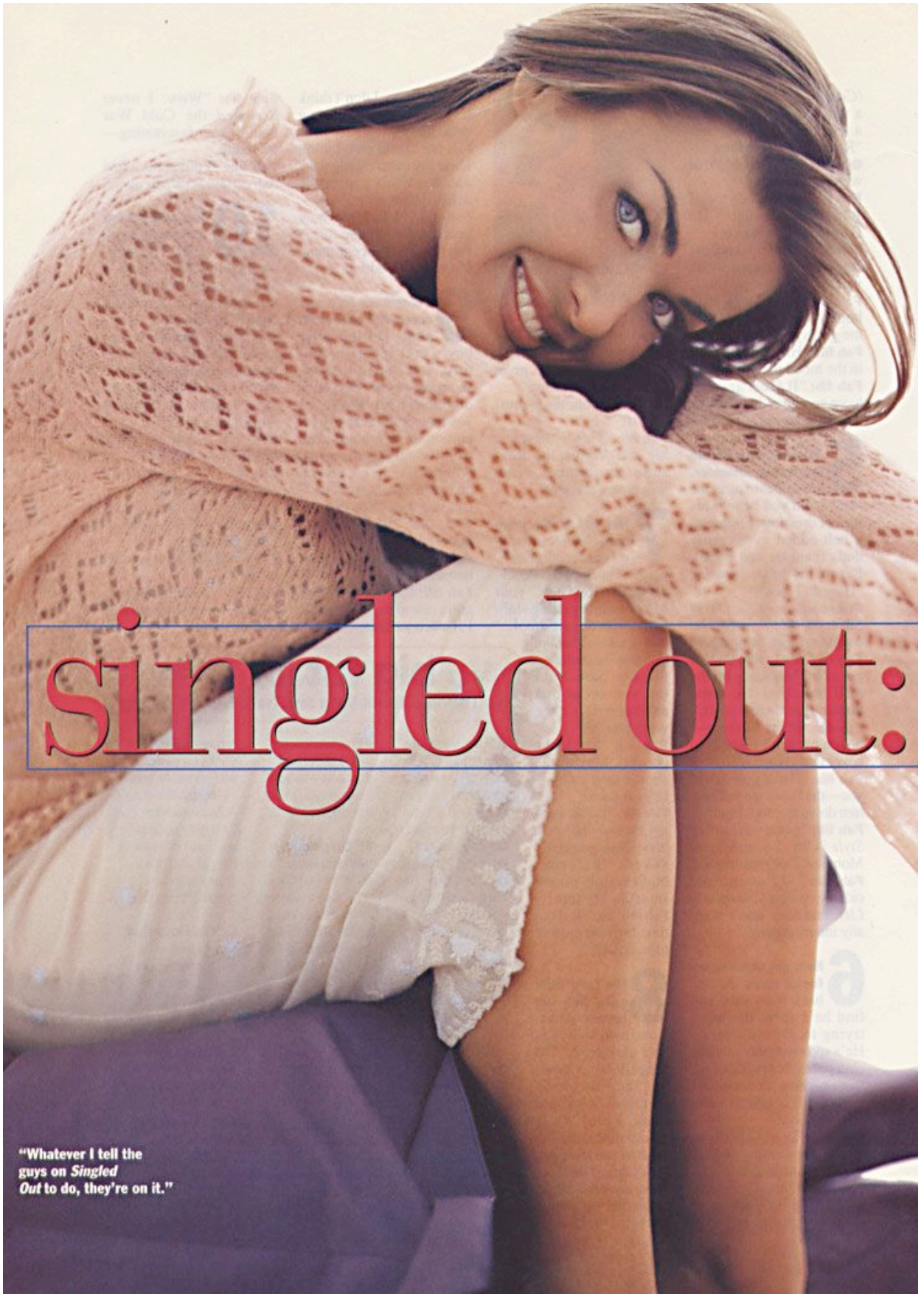
what they really think about: ♡ mushy moments
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singled out:

"Whatever I tell the
guys on *Singled
Out* to do, they're on it."



How do you get MTV's coolest cohost, Carmen Electra, to spill—about her show, her love life, and her new *Baywatch* gig? Take her shopping, meet her boyfriend, chat it up, and tape away

BY JENNIFER GRAHAM

Back in fourth grade, Carmen Electra used to force one boy classmate to give her his lunch money and another to carry her books up the stairs. "They were afraid of me," says the 5-foot-4-inch cohost of MTV's dating show, *Singed Out*. "I'm sure they could have told the teacher if they'd really wanted to, but they never did."

Fifteen years later, in 1996, Carmen arrived at MTV to replace Jenny McCarthy as cohost of its truth-or-dare-style matchmaking show. "Be tough on those boys," Jenny told her. Carmen

smiled slyly. If anyone could handle the frat house that Jenny built, she could.

Today, 60 Carmen-dominated episodes later, *Singed Out*'s the highest-rated show on MTV. And as for the 100 jazzed-up contestants per show (50 of whom are dudes), Carmen rules the set with no bullying necessary. "I tell our security guards to relax. I never have problems. Whatever I tell the guys to do, they're on it."

That's some serious power, considering that these boys take orders like "sound sexy while eating Brussels

sprouts" and "pretend you're Darth Vader fighting for a date." "If I weren't hosting, I'd be a contestant," says the perky 25-year-old. "It suits me perfectly."

Rabble-rousers, take note: this behavior seems to have paid off. One day last year, a *Baywatch* writer/producer was working out at the gym when she saw a segment on an entertainment show about *Singed Out*'s foxy new lady—and she almost fell off her bike! She'd been looking for a babe-with-personality to fill the de-
(Continued on next page)

it's electra!

carmen vs. jenny

Listen up, Carmen cynics! For those of you who think she's just a Jenny-wannabe, we gave MTV's new cohost a chance to prove you wrong. We asked 'em both to answer five questions—and got some majorly different answers. Grab a pen and see if you can tell which responses are Carmen's. One of these will probably stump you

what we see on *Singed Out*?

- (a) Sometimes, but I can actually be quite shy, too.
- (b) What you see is what you get.

1 What makes you sweat?

- (a) Doing karate chops.
- (b) Dancing and practicing taebo (a combo of kick-boxing and tai chi).

2 You're a seriously huge fan of:

- (a) the L.A. Lakers.
- (b) the Chicago Bulls.

3 Where's your secret tattoo?

- (a) On my back.
- (b) What tattoo?

4 What were you like in high school?

- (a) I was a total outcast.
- (b) I was popular—senior year, I was voted Best Looking, Best Dressed, and Best Dancer.

5 Tell the truth. Is your personality

Carmen says... turn over to find out

that she could also get her way by being demure. loved to fight. But as the only girl, she learned housing—she grew up with four brothers who
5 (a) This tough chick is no stranger to rough-
4 (b) And she had tons of boyfriends. What gives?
3 (b) Her guy's got enough for both of them.
since high school.
2 (a) Carmen's been an L.A. native on and off
to two hours a day when her schedule permits it.
strength, and flexibility moves. She works out one
actually like an aerobics class—with martial arts,
1 (b) Sounds weird, but Carmen says taebo is

(Cont. from previous page) parting Pamela Lee's... suit—and, well, she'd found her girl. Carmen joined the cast in June and will appear on the show later this month.

hangin' at the mall

Shopping is Carmen's fave hobby, so we agree to talk while tooling through her local mall in Sherman Oaks, CA. Her boyfriend, B Real (from the hard-core rap group Cypress Hill), comes along—looking none too psyched about mall-shopping with two girls. I feel superprivileged to see B's cute, goateed face and close-cropped hair, since they're usually hidden by a hooded sweatshirt or pulled-down hat onstage. He's a lot less scary in just a T-shirt and jeans—though with that buff bod, he could easily double as Carmen's bodyguard. We meet in Macy's, at the MAC makeup counter, but we don't stick there long. ("I wear MAC, but I get it for free at MTV," Carmen says.) Instead, she and I head for the food court to start out with some froyo, and B takes off to buy socks.

Walking around with Carmen is a surreal experience. We get lots of stares, though it's difficult to say whether people recognize her or are just drinking in her movie-star looks. This isn't a girl you want to scam for guys

with—unless you don't mind fading into the wall while the dudes stare at your bud. In her red-and-yellow-plaid hip-huggers and white tiny tee, she's exactly one of those screen stars whom people have described as being "even more beautiful in person."

chillin' in the food court

Carmen orders a medium nonfat vanilla yogurt with chocolate sprinkles and starts telling me about *Baywatch*. "David Chokachi plays my man on the show," she says. "I'm really excited about it, because he's a nice person. I don't want to work with some guy who's gonna try to stick his tongue down my throat."

I tell her I just met model Michael Bergin, who's also starting on *Baywatch* this season, and that he's major-league cute. Her eyes widen. "Really?" she says. "Maybe my character will have an affair behind Chokachi's back, and I can have my way with both of them!"

Ahem—can we say "perfect life"? If she weren't so nice, I'd want to smash her face in that yogurt. But Carmen hasn't exactly walked on rose petals since birth. In fact, she can completely relate to the struggle of her *Baywatch* character, a dancer who moves to Los Angeles from Hawaii. "My character was one of the

most popular dancers back home," Carmen says. "But when she moves to L.A., there are a million amazing dancers there."

Similarly, when she was a teenager, Carmen was the song-and-dance goddess of her class at the School for Creative and Performing Arts in Cincinnati—then, when she moved to the bigger stage of L.A., she experienced that same ego blow.

Unlike her character, though, she lucked into meeting the Artist. (This was back when he was still going by the name Prince and she was still going by Tara Patrick, the name her parents gave her.) The first thing Prince did was suggest that she change her name to Carmen—which means "song" in Latin, though the dark-haired beauty admits that Prince simply thought she looked like a Carmen (she added Electra a few months later, just for the sound of it). Prince became her mentor, helped her write songs, signed her to his label (a division of Warner Brothers Records)—and ultimately produced her pop record, *Carmen Electra*. Asked if they were ever smooching partners, (Continued on page 82)

carmen's dudes

Straight from Carmen's mouth to your ears—here's the first-person scoop on the men in her life:



B Real + Carmen

B REAL (her boyfriend): "You'd think he'd feel threatened by my job, since I'm surrounded by 50 cute guys all the time. But he's been great—

he's actually proud. He doesn't get jealous."

CHRIS HARDWICK (her cohost): "Chris isn't the kind of guy who girls look at and go, 'Oh, he's hot,' and because of that people don't give him the respect he deserves. He's very, very intelligent and has such a fast wit, which is really sexy."

THE ARTIST (her mentor): "Working with him was incredible. With his help I was able to build up an underground following. Now people want to buy my record, and it's really hard to find. That makes it even more special."

JOHN TRAVOLTA (her ultimate crush): "He's the one guy who could make me blush. All he'd have to do is look at me."

witness the electra booty shake!



How does Carmen manage to stay size 2?



She steps onto the *Singled Out* set and...



... shows the MTV nation how to shake it!

CARMEN'S GUIDE to a great first date

All right, enough with being single. Ready to irrigate that dating dry spell? Follow Carmen's directions

1 Select a candidate: "I met B Real in a club, but I was lucky. I don't recommend guy-hunting there. You're better off snagging him at school, the gym, the grocery store, or the mall—some place that's a part of your daily life."

2 Announce your existence: "First rule: don't do anything like drop a pencil and pick it up in front of him! If you're in school together, sit next to him in class every day, and eventually you'll end up talking. Once you're semi-friends, have a party at your place and invite him."

3 Become his dream girl: "Be friendly in a cas way. In fact, when B and I first met, I shied away from him, because his music is pretty hard-core. He ended up being even more interested in me."

4 Keep things chill: "For your first date, try a place where your friends will be around. The first time I went out with B, I brought my best friend along with us to dinner. Since B dug me, he was okay with it."

5 Converse wisely: "Talk about anything but your past boy-friends—it turns people off. If I'm at a loss for words, I usually comment that my neck is sore—so that he'll rub it."

6 Order with care: "I'd get a chicken and rice dish. Avoid messy stuff, like tacos or spaghetti. And share a hot-fudge sundae for dessert—that's romantic."

7 Be like Posh Spice: "Have class. That means don't go further than a kiss goodnight on the first date. If the guy is really into you, he'll respect that."

8 Assess the situation: "I knew B was right for me when my friend said, 'Look into his eyes.' I did, and they were so sincere. Friends are great for a second opinion."

(Continued from page 80) Carmen says no—his influence was entirely about her career.

There was just one snafu. When the record came out, Prince was trying to get out of his contract with Warner Brothers, which turned into a hellacious legal battle that consumed all his time. Though Carmen still got to tour with him as an opening act, her music never got the big-time promotion it needed. Today, she doesn't see it as disappointing: "I did everything I wanted to do. And look where I am now."

She's in the middle of explaining all this to me when we both look up and notice a cute boy in a T-shirt and oversized hip-hop-style jeans hovering patiently next to us.

"Are you Carmen Electra?" he asks.

"Yes."

"Are you doing anything next Friday?"

"Um, I don't know. Why?"

"Would you like to go to my senior prom with me?"

Carmen's totally caught off guard—but she's cool about it.

"Aww! That's so sweet!" she says. "Write your number on this napkin, and I'll find out if I'll be around."

"Just a couple of hours would make my life," he says, handing his number to her and walking away.

trollin' for threads

B Real shows up again. As we walk around, he shows me the extensive tattoos on his muscle-man arms. The explanation goes like this: "Here's the Cypress Hill emblem [a skull and crossbones], here's my woman [Carmen's face], here's a helicopter full of cops harassing everybody...." And so on. I'm glad that prom boy missed B—who would've eaten him for dinner.

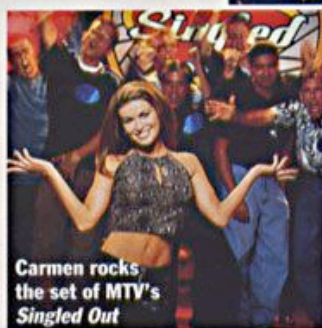
Carmen's into checking

out the duds in Bebe, Ramage, Guess—and less excited about The Limited and Contempo Casuals. It's pretty obvious that she's all about hip-huggers and bright-colored tops. "When I first started working at *Singled Out*, I had to wear all Jenny's leftovers," she says. "My friends kept telling me, 'Carmen, you don't look like yourself.'" Carmen's since broken out her own style.

In one of the stores, we're shopping for no more than two minutes when a song by the Artist comes on. B's peeved. "It happens all of



Carmen's a perfect "11"



Carmen rocks the set of MTV's Singled Out

the time," he says. "Salespeople see us and switch to a Prince CD." For a nanosecond, I wonder if he's threatened by Carmen's old relationship. Nah, I realize, she's obviously gaga for B, and he's seriously smitten, too. "Certain people make a lasting impression," B says about the day he met her. "Others don't. She's in the first category."

As for her style, B says, "She looks great in everything—except maybe baggy clothes." Well, yeah—she might get lost in them. This dream girl's got the slimmest bod ever (size 2)—and, un-freakin'-believably, she doesn't diet.

record shoppin'

When we wander into Sam Goody, Carmen and B head straight for the r&b and hip-hop section. "My record was more pop than urban,

but I listen to this kind of stuff," she says, picking up Lil' Kim's latest, then Ginuwine's. I wait till B is out of earshot, then ask her who she thinks is the sexiest guy rocker out there. "Lenny Kravitz," she replies. "I love his music and his style."

I ask her to look around the store and name a rock chick she'd love to meet. "Madonna," she says. "She does everything that she feels like doing—model-

ing, acting, music. I want to do that, too."

But the fact is, this gorgeous go-getter already has. Carmen has a cameo in this summer's flick *Good Burger*,

where she plays a villain trying to steal a special-sauce recipe (how cool!). Plus, she's in two hit TV shows and in November plans to start work on her next album. Will she be doing any duets with B, I ask? He walks over, grinning. "We'd like to, but our music's pretty different."

"We'll see," Carmen chirps.

As we're leaving, we see two skate dudes (baggy shorts to below the knees, old tees) who are obviously buds with B and Carmen.

"We're having a party at The Gate," one says. "Want us to put you on the list?"

"Yeah, we might go."

"We'd be totally stoked if you showed up," the boy says. Frankly, he looks totally stoked just to be standing in a mall talking to the goddess that is Carmen. The best part is, she's completely unaware. "I just try to be myself," she tells me when I point out her major guy-magnetism. "And if my sex appeal comes across from time to time, that's okay, because I think it's natural."

Now *that's* girl power. Rock on, Carmen. □