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***URB*: WHAT IS THE MESSAGE OF YOUR A CAPELLA TRACK "WATCH OVER THEM"?**

MD: That track is 100 percent directed to my fellow black brothers and sisters in England. There is a massive problem globally regarding racism, but what's really difficult now in England is that the media have kind of tricked us into believing things are better. Racism here is institutionalized. So if you're not aware, you could miss it, although even the dumbest black person on earth has to endure it on a daily basis.

TO WHOM ARE YOU SPEAKING ON "IT TAKES MORE" WHEN YOU SAY, "YOU'RE JUST THE RACIST MAN'S PUSSY"?

My fellow black British people. It's a continuation of the same idea: we can't make things any easier for ourselves because we haven't got a sense of unity. I hear so many young black men in Britain talking about the white man and how he does this and that. But it's not them selling crack to your fellow black brothers, it's you. So you're no better than him. You're doing his work for him. No one ever talks about the responsibility we have to ourselves and to each other. It's always about them and what they do to us. Don't get me wrong: that is important and we clearly need to fight against that. But how exactly do we do that if we're constantly fighting each other? That's the message of that track.

IT MUST BE FRUSTRATING KNOWING THAT YOUR POSITIVE MESSAGES ARE ONLY GETTING OUT THERE BECAUSE RECORD EXECS THINK THAT THEY WILL SELL, IF ONLY FOR THEIR NOVELTY.

[shaking her head] The way I get my head around it for now is that I can't get to where I'm going without them. But I believe there will come a point when they are unnecessary. Right now, Britain is so far behind here [America] in the sense that you still don't see positive black people on the TV, like a black doctor or a black scientist. That's a big deal. Instantly, you're looking at him thinking, "Is he like a black person that I know? Could I relate to him? Or is he what *they* think a black person is like?" You never just see it.

IT MUST BE SATISFYING, THOUGH, KNOWING THAT YOU ARE IN A POSITION TO MAKE A CHANGE.

It is. It really is. But it's like the closer I get and the more power I get in terms of having a voice, the more I have problems with the media. Last year, because my music has a political element to it, I was asked to appear on this television program *News Night*, where the audience is 99 percent middle-class white people — the same type of people who are actually involved in British politics. I was interviewed for the music section, and the interviewer said to me, "Would you ever consider getting into politics?" And I said, "Yeah, why not?" The only way we can change stuff in this country is if the people that run it represent the people who live in it. The cabinet is full of middle-class, over-40-year-old white males who do not relate to me in any way whatsoever. How can they speak for me or make decisions on my behalf?

WHAT WAS THE RESPONSE?

Sure enough, within two days there was this big report: "Ms. Dynamite Isn't As Nice As She Makes Out." The tabloids followed me to Los Angeles, they took pictures of my boyfriend and printed all sorts of negative reports — all of it just lies. That's the most frustrating thing. I don't care if people lie about me, but now they're bringing my family into it and my boyfriend's family, many who I haven't even met yet. I wanna just say, "You're all fucking racist pigs!" but it's also making me realize that I've definitely got something to fight for. I'm not afraid to speak out. And not just for black people. I'm not here saying "black power"; that's not what I'm into. I've got a white mum. I believe in equality for everybody. And I will never shut up.

Daley is five months pregnant when we talk. Her baby is due in July, booking a non-negotiable chunk of time in her hectic schedule this year when she won't be able to star in her own skyrocketing career.

"People around me were like, 'what are you gonna do? Isn't this gonna disrupt everything?' I was like, 'Of course it is. But it's *fun*!'" she exclaims, laughing. "I don't look at things like they're gonna slow me down. This is just another turn." She pauses. "But come back to me after I've had the baby. I could be saying something totally different!" she adds.

"You know, if you're someone who always plans everything to the tee, you're going to constantly be disappointed, because life will do something to fuck it up," Daley says wisely. Still, being a mother was something that Daley had planned even before her musical career.

"From a young age, I've always seen myself as a mom. I think being the oldest of 10 kids influenced me a bit. Last year, I got to the point with my boyfriend that we wanted to get married and we stopped using protection. I was this would happen (sic). I know people think I'm crazy, but I don't give a shit. I'm so happy I'm gonna have a baby!"

"It's already brought me a sense of peace," she continues. "Little things that I wanted to fix in me as a person are getting fixed now, and really quickly. Because I don't want to inflict those things on my child, I'm working on being the best mom that I can hopefully be."

With such vigilance, it's not surprising that Daley's would-be professions of choice included either teacher or social work. In music, her activist nature has found a global home and a clear purpose.

"My music is a voice," she says thoughtfully. "It's not about being the best or having the highest record sales. It's about making a difference by reaching out and touching people. And I'll keep going until I can see a real change."

■■■