



## EPISODE SEVEN //

### Brown Girl. White Guy. Let the Existential Crisis Begin.

#### INTRO

This is Janie's Daughters! Leave a message at the beep!

[Beep]

Jaineeeee – OMG. Did you see Scandal last night? I want Olivia Pope's life – minus the crazy. Ok, fine, I just want her closet.

[Theme Music Plays]

Welcome to Janie's Daughters, a podcastumentary that follows five kick ass women of colors and their adventures and antics in the real world of marriages, careers, sex, family, and faith. From one colored girl to another, this is life as WE know it.

Janie's Daughters is a project of Colored Girl Confidential. You're listening to Season One, Episode Seven. Here we go...

#### SOLANA

*"Brown Girl. White Guy. Let the Existential Crisis Begin."*

"I told someone the other day that if you married a black guy I'd fall out from surprise."

Those words came across my g-chat and I stared at them incredulously. My best guy friend and I were discussing my date for that night. I asked him if he made the comment because my date played hockey or because he was my date.

"Because of YOU." He responded. I wanted to be upset. How dare he insinuate that anyone I date must fall under the category of "other." But then I thought about it. The current roster of guys I'm dating: 3 white guys, 1 Indian guy, and 1 black guy.

N - he's white. KB was mixed. My law school exploits were mostly white. So were a few of the undergraduates ones. I guess it is me. The reason why, I'm afraid, is one that is common to a lot of brown girls in my position. The selection of brown boys available to up and coming brown girls leaves a bad taste in your mouth.

In college it was a lack of quantity. There were 4 brown girls for every brown guy. And the ones that were out and about? Let's just say that they were ambitious, career-seeking, young men with their head on their shoulders in nearly every way... except when it came to treating women on campus right. With virtual sushi platters of women available,

the men on campus could have sex and mistreat three women before settling on the fourth, and most of the women would allow it.

What other choice did they have? End up alone? On a tough academic campus like ours, being without the support system of someone who understands, who you can talk to and cry to at night was hard. Plan B? Seek out a man of another race. Not that the grass was necessarily greener- BUT- with a wider pool of selection a girl was not necessarily limited to having the seconds or thirds that her friends had already had. I discovered this as a junior in college.

I also discovered something else that would become foundational to my dating white men near-exclusively. Something that I don't think I realized until I started on-line dating. White men tend to have access to resources. Resources that I was searching for in a partner. Resources that matched the ones I was trying to obtain on my own.

The summers that I worked in investment banking, I was often the only black girl and was exposed to companions who spent summers in Martha's Vineyard like I had. Companions who understood my background, wanted the things that I wanted, and had the drive to get them. So I began dating my colleagues and although they didn't look like me, it felt more similar to dating "my kind" than dating based on color ever had. I realized that life experiences had trumped my race when it came to dating.

A friend once asked me if two men were the exact same on paper, but one was black and one was white, which one would I choose? I responded that I was indifferent. I actually don't know if I am. Part of me thinks that I would like to choose to the black man. That there is something so special about the continuing tradition of black love. Something so unique about the experience of being black, and the connection of two souls raised under one culture. But another part of me has seen what happens lately.

On the search function of Match.com, I scroll through the profiles of men who match my criteria. Taller than 5'10, graduated college, no kids, never married. The black faces that stare back at me get clicked less often. What assumptions am I making about the men behind them? Ones I would never make about my father. A successful black man in his field, A successful *man* in his field. A leader, a first of many.

How can I be Michelle or Clair if I'm passing up my Baracks and my Cliffs? Then I wonder should I even care. Am I forcing a preference of black men on myself because everyone suggests that I should? Dating is hard enough as it is. I should be focused on dating someone who has the same goals as me, who loves me for who I am, who wants to grow with me. If he happens to be black he does- but as history is showing itself.... I wouldn't hold my breath.

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## **CARMEN**

### *"On Not Having The Answer, Meeting Future Carmen, and My Need for a Motivational Flash Mob"*

I have been feeling really heavy lately, wondering what is next for me. Wondering where I should be, with WHOM I should be, WHAT I should be. In a conversation recently with a homegirl-sister-friend in the midst of asking herself these same questions, my friend began that oh so familiar refrain of "I don't know," To which I replied "You don't have to."

I didn't realize what I was saying. Nor did I immediately recognize that though I was telling her, really I was telling me.

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You don't have to know. You Don't Have To Know! AY CARMEN, YOU DONT HAVE TO KNOW! It really is a freeing, liberating idea. Or at least it would be... if I truly believed it.

But the little girl that knew all the right answers in class, who tied her self worth to her grades and her perceived rightness, what will she do now that she knows that not only does she not have to know the right answer but in many instances there is no right answer in the first damn place!?

There are just choices, decisions, and consequences; chosen paths and fateful circumstances. There is no right way. There are no right answers. So what does that little girl do now? What do I do now?

I keep joking that I want Future Carmen to jump in a time machine, travel back in time to right here, right now, and tell me decisions I should be making. Or at least tell me that everything is gonna be just fine.

But there are a few major problems with that: 1) You can't cross your own time stream (I'm a Dr. Who fan, don't judge me) 2) Where would future Carmen get a time machine (I want her to be more responsible with her... um, my money) and 3) I would quickly become obsessed with becoming her and I would be paralyzed with fear at upcoming decision.

So this is the point where I need everyone in my life to organize a flash mob and to sing-yell in 5 part harmony that ITS GONNA BE OKKKKK!!!!!! But since that wont happen I will tell myself. I will chant like Tina in What's Love Got to Do With it, I don't have to know the right answer. There *are* no right answers. It will be ok. It will be ok. It will be ok.

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## MAYA

### “Catching Fire... and I'm Not Talking About the Hunger Games”

It's been a few weeks since I have seen Stephan because I have been so busy with all the cool and totally empowering things that I am doing on the side. Oh yeah, Maya is in the ZONE!

And as anticipated, as soon as I was busy and not worried in the least about trying to attract men, men, both new and old, pretty much began falling from the sky. Post week of Maya empowerment guys have been around me left and right and I am finding myself having to say "no thanks" more often than "thank you." But that is all good.

At this point, you know all about Stephan and last night he and I connected after weeks of text-tag as to when we could meet. As soon as he walked in my door (I had shaved and primed and had an awesome new dress on) we were on each other with a quickness, hands and mouths and legs flying and connecting and exploring and... then stop. We had to have dinner first. Haha.

He's telling me that he's been thinking about me and I find myself smiling really big as we walk hand in hand out the door. We go to the corner market first to get some rolling papers so we can relax after dinner. Then we head to the sushi place near my house and are once again all over each other like teenagers in love.

Now let me say something about myself really clearly - this is NOT me. I am not that girl that is cuddly and lovey and all over some guy but Stephan just brings it out of me. I don't know if he's got some crazy pheromones that make me biologically respond to him with every cell leaning in his direction but there is something chemical about him, that makes me want to love on him like he is a baby lamb and I am the momma.

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I am really enjoying looking into his eyes while we talk, he's setting me at ease but also provoking my inner feistiness and laughter that comes from deep within. He's telling me all kinds of things about his life, ending his sentences with "I don't usually share this much, I don't know what you are doing to me."

All of a sudden we are able to have a very real conversation about the fact that we will not stay together and that we will both be married to other people one day. Does this sound intense and like a downer? It wasn't. It was the most honest conversation that we could have - absolutely refreshing to just be able to say to someone. "Your time is valuable to me and I like you so much. I could fall for you. You make me smile and the feelings flow - but we know this won't last and that is okay because it is a beautiful thing"

After dinner, we head back to the same corner store to get some beer and while walking out I laugh and ask if he has protection, and send him inside to get some. I shock myself with the recognition that I am ready to connect to him in this way. This also tells me so clearly that my heart is open and ready for another connection after taking time to myself and not letting anyone else new in to be intimate with. It makes me smile inside knowing this and I can't wait for the night to unfold.

Back home we smoke a little, and then he's kissing me. I open myself up to him in ways I haven't to anyone in months. It's natural and I realize I asked for these moments when I told the universe what I needed to be happy. That these moments with him may be over soon, but I am lucky to be with someone that sees and stokes my fire. There is nothing about me to him that is an "illusion" of Maya. To him I am very real, and in his arms - and it feels good and right.

The rest of the night is spent sleeping and cuddling and adjusting to a new person beside me, which makes sleep fitful. In the morning he awakens and opens to me, and we explore each other again. It hits me so hard that what I enjoy about him I love in myself in this new avatar as a powerful and healing woman - love can be fleeting but we are better for being vulnerable to connection.

I spend the rest of the day in deep gratitude for the experience of feeling alive again, to Stephan and our night together, and to myself for letting it all happen.

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## TAMAR

### *"Sorry Is The Hardest Word"*

I came across something on the interwebs recently that went something like this: "People would be much happier in life if they learned to accept an apology that they will probably never get." I know that this was not the phrase verbatim but this is what I remember and it has had the most profound impact on me.

As I meditated on this phrase over the next few days I truly internalized the radical act that it was asking me to commit to. The notion that I could move on from a past hurt and accept an apology that had never actually been uttered to me was truly a radical notion.

Not because it had been difficult for me to move on from past hurts but because I had always thought that in order to do so I needed to forgive the person without thought to they were actually sorry. What if instead of forgiving them

because of me I forgave them because they were actually apologetic, even if I were technically unaware that they were.

As days passed the phrase and its call continued coming up in my spirit and I realized that what it was trying to tell me has nothing to do with me at all. When I finally took the time to check in with my self and figure out what the true meaning in the phrase is for me, I began to think of all the people in my life that I had potentially hurt. More specifically I began to think of my past partner's who I had 'deceived' on my journey to self actualization.

As I sat with my own shit I realized that none of them had ever gotten an apology from me and since we are now out of contact they probably never will. I began to wonder what impact my need to become my authentic self may have had on their life. I had never intended or anticipated not being authentic with any of them or hurting them when I was finally able to reveal a little bit more of my truth. So while they are probably off living their lives, not at all concerned with me or what I am doing with mine, I would like to offer up an apology to the Universe, the apology that they may never get but hopefully have learned to accept.

To the three men with whom I shared space and time. You all taught me so much about myself and about what true commitment should look like. I am sorry that I could not be honest with you about my true self. While I loved you in my own way, I truly apologize that I made you think I loved you in a deeper, more meaningful way.

I am sorry that I had not yet reconciled my sexuality with the other parts of myself, namely my spirituality, to be able to tell you that I did not want you, that I could not be with you. I am forever grateful for the space and time we shared and I thank you for helping me along my journey to embrace my true self.

Finally to my first true love. You and I met at a time when we needed one another but weren't ready for each other all at the same time. You were the first woman that I allowed myself to love and because of how things ended it took me a very long time to allow myself to fully connect to another woman. That is not your fault though. You were out and proud, living as your authentic self at that time.

I was very new in my journey, I refused to wear labels and titles and essentially asked you to hide with me. Though that was what was best for me, it was unfair to you. I apologize for asking you not be your authentic self; now that I have become self-actualized I realize what an agonizing request that was.

Watching your life from afar and seeing you complete another journey of self-actualization, I want to say how proud I am of you. We met at a time when we were both at the beginning of our journey to become our authentic selves. I am sorry that I could not love you the way you needed to be loved at that time but I am so thankful for the role you played in my life and in helping me to become the woman that I am today.

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## **ZORA**

### *"On Trading Pain for Poetry, or Something Like That"*

This holiday season I have decided for the first time ever to give myself a gift- a genuine to me, from me kind of present. I have decided to bring sexy back. Yes, you heard me correctly. In a generous gesture of love, I plan on gifting myself with some fierce, sexy glam- from my over the top silver tree and slightly gaudy garland to my must have flirty lashes, perfectly fitted black jeans and accompanying naughty undies, finished off to perfection with red lipstick so wet

and wild folk will see me smiling a mile away. Yes, I have it all planned and this is definitely going to be one sexy holiday.

Of course if I were being totally honest, I would have to admit that despite my excitement, I am a little nervous. I mean what aging hasn't compromised, chronic illness has eaten away at slowly so these days a lot of my natural beauty seems more faded than fierce.

Still, this is doable. I just have to remember that sexy is as much about confidence, and your own power as it is about the shimmer and the shine you use to polish up the goods. Sexy is as much about attitude as it is about appearance and attitude I got so maybe, just maybe, my sexy has a shot.

I know some will wonder about these holiday plans of mine. After all, isn't sexy something you strap on to attract attention or entice a lover? Is sexy something you can really give yourself? Well my answer of course is a resounding yes!

You do have to fall in love with yourself again. You also have to appreciate everything- even the sags, the bags and flab because they too tell the beautiful story of you. And you have to be courageous. Because when you bring your sexy back people will look and they will look hard. And that's a good thing.

So I am ready. Ready to gift me some sexy. And it's waiting for me too. Right here under my silver over the top glam bam sparking holiday tree.