

# Invading Cardi B's Privacy

By Tyra Triche



In 2013, a rowdy “stripper hoe” from the Bronx introduced herself to the world by way of Vines (R.I.P.) and Instagram videos that went viral. Now, five years, one reality television show, two mixtapes, a record deal with Atlantic Records and 24 million Instagram followers later, Cardi B is taking the world by storm. Her music has always showcased her tenacious spirit, resilient attitude and tough exterior, but with her debut album *Invasion of Privacy*, Cardi allows herself to be more vulnerable and transparent than ever before.

Cardi B, who was born Belcalis Almanzar, landed a spot on *Love and Hip Hop: New York* in 2015. After two seasons on the show, though, she quit and decided to dedicate her time to her music. Her first mixtapes, *Gangsta Bitch Music Volume 1 and 2*, consist primarily of her talking her shit. And rightfully so— she had made it out the strip club and was starting to make a name for herself in hip-hop. *GBMV 1* dropped in March of 2016 and peaked at #27 on the Billboard Independent Albums chart. The following year, she released *GBMV 2* which hit #25. Songs like “Forever,” “Lit Thot,” “Pull Up” and “Lick” proved that she was capable of making hits. The songs were catchy, had good lyrics and well-produced beats, but did not offer much depth into who Cardi B really is.

On *Invasion of Privacy*, she wastes no time proving that she plans to dominate the rap game with the first song “Get Up 10.” The song is reminiscent of Meek Mill’s “Dreams and Nightmares,” with a beat that grows slowly in the beginning until it reaches a strong bass drop. “Knock me down nine times and I’ll get up ten, bitch,” she warns as the song ends. A clear message to everyone who doubts her she will not be defeated. Her braggadocious attitude is consistent throughout songs like “Drip,” featuring Migos, “Bartier Cardi,” featuring 21 Savage, and her record breaking single “Bodak Yellow.”

These boastful, confident songs are nothing new from Cardi, though. They are what she has built her career on. The songs about love and heartache are what’s really new. “Be Careful,” which samples Lauryn Hill’s “Ex-Factor,” initially received mixed reviews from fans. This was to be expected though, as the song is wildly different than the average Cardi song and, arguably, shows her at her most vulnerable. In the song, she sing-raps about giving her heart to the wrong man, saying that if he continues to do her wrong, he will lose her. Heartbreak and disappointment are evident in her voice, over the slow melodic beat. “Ring,” featuring Kehlani, and “Thru Your Phone,” offer very similar messages as “Be Careful,” but with a more typical Cardi B spunk.

Though she ventured out of her comfort zone for a few songs, the album is still full of Cardi’s fun charisma. In the song “Bickenhead,” she clarifies that she made the song specifically for “all the nasty hoes all across the globe.” Sampling Project Pat’s “Chickenhead,” this song will for sure be the summer anthem for the ladies. As will “I Do,” featuring SZA, in which the duo let everyone know they are going to do what they feel like doing, with no regard for what anyone has to say. The fun continues on “She Bad,” featuring YG, “Best Life” featuring Chance the Rapper, and “Money Bag.” Cardi also embraces her Trinidadian and Dominican roots, with the reggaeton song “I Like It” featuring Bad Bunny and J Balvin.

*Invasion of Privacy* is a clear indication of Cardi’s growth as an artist and young woman. Her tenacious spirit, resilient attitude and tough exterior continue to shine throughout the album just as much as they did on *GBMV 1 and 2*, but in a more mature and candid manner. While she still raps about proving her haters wrong, she also lets fans in on more personal aspects of her life, both the triumphs and the let-downs.