

Scandal, motherf-ckers, everybody loves a scandal. Even if you try to turn away, you can't, when you try to ignore it, you find it impossible.

You know why? Because it's awesome, hilarious, awful, it's a f-cking mess, and it almost always makes you feel better about yourself. So admit it, you love and your friends love and your family loves everyone you know loves a scandal, the bigger the better, the uglier the more fun, the more devastation the better you feel.

He was born in Miami his parents are Cuban. He grew up wanting to become an actor the biggest Latin movie star in history. As a child he dressed up and put on shows for his mother, his sister, they both loved him and his shows and they fawned over him he was a precocious child, smart and funny and entertaining.

As he grew up he didn't fit in with any of the other Cuban boys in his neighborhood they idolized boxers and baseball players he couldn't have cared less. He would skip their afterschool games and come home and read magazines and watch soap operas and listen to his mother gossip with her friends, neighbors, there was always something to talk about, a new story, someone drinking or fighting or cheating, someone creating some sort of little scandal. When he was old enough ten or eleven he started gossiping with his mother. He'd collect stories at school bring them home he loved it when they were good enough for his mother to pass them on, and he loved that he knew things other people didn't know, but wanted to know, that secrets were currency, as valuable as anything else in the world, sometimes more valuable.

He did well in school. He was on the student council, he starred in most of his school's shows and plays, he got good grades. He came out to his family in tenth grade, first to his sister, then to his mother, then to his father, none of them were surprised, all of them were supportive, they said they loved him regardless of who or how he loved, all they were interested in was his happiness. At school he was one of a very small number of gay students, and though most of the kids were cool to him, he got slurred and taunted enough so that he developed a very thick skin and very sharp tongue. And no one who disparaged him escaped without getting something back, something that was always smarter and more pointed, something that hurt significantly more. Rarely did someone come back for more, but if they did, he was always ready for them. When he finished high school he went to New York for college. He had been accepted to one of the best theater schools in the country, and he wanted to be on Broadway. He made friends did shows went out dated lived the life of a college student, for whatever the reason people confided in him, told him stories, shared their secrets with him. When he was asked, he kept them secret. When he wasn't asked, he didn't. He started a column in the school paper, a gossip column that dealt with what was going on at school, who was dating who, who might want to date who, debunked or confirmed rumors, had funny blind items. It was lighthearted and genial, well written, showed off his wit. It became the most read column at the school, students who had never bothered with the paper started picking it up, talking about it. A professor encouraged him to take a journalism class he did, he enjoyed it, journalism became his minor, acting and theater was still his first love.

When he finished school he decided to stay in New York. He hadn't made it to Broadway yet and still had the dream, he decided to look for a job in journalism as a way to pay his bills and support a life in New York. He got an internship turned it into a full-time position. He became a reporter became the editor of a small gay magazine. He went on auditions when he could did plays when he had time. The magazine he worked for folded he got a job at a huge, national, weekly gossip magazine. He was a reporter he was expected to find stories, report stories, break stories. In the world of professional gossip getting stories is all about having relationships with people who have them and protecting those people as sources. He started going out more, hitting parties, clubs, premieres, meeting more people some of whom were celebrities, developing friendships. He was easy to be around, funny friendly gracious, he listened well, people trusted him.

He learned about the facade of fame, that the people who lived behind the facade were no different than other people, that some were good and decent and relatively normal, that others abused their privilege, abused the gifts society bestowed upon them, treated those they thought beneath them as if they were less

than human. Stories started coming. He always made sure what he wrote was accurate, that his sources were valid. Many of the stories were harmless, sometimes he passed on stories about people he liked, with those he didn't, as long as he knew it was true, he was merciless. Because he was young and new to the business, reporters more senior than him often took credit for his work. Sometimes he missed stories because he was working on his acting. Sometimes, because he was young and new, the stories went to other people first. He worked hard, though, and began to love his job.

A year into the job, the magazine's sales started to slow down. The market had become overcrowded there were new magazines every day, the Internet was drawing away a large portion of the magazine's audience. The magazine needed to make layoffs he was one of them he was crushed. He had been proud of his job and it was fun and it allowed him to pursue his dream. He cried when he left the office cried when he got back to his apartment cried when he called his mother, when he told his sister. He wasn't sure what he was going to do. He wanted to stay in New York he still hoped to get on Broadway, there was no way he'd be able to do it without a job to pay his bills. He didn't want to wait tables or serve coffee. He had been in New York for seven years. He decided to leave.

He went to Los Angeles. There were more opportunities for actors, for every one job in New York there were fifty in LA. He started a Web site with a gossip blog, he hoped he could generate enough interest to attract a couple advertisers, which would allow him to work on his own schedule, go to auditions, control how he lived his life. He named his site after a popular gossip column, used a variation of the numbers that also indicated a humorous, satanic intent. He looked at other blogs and tried to figure out what worked and what didn't, the better ones broke original stories and updated themselves more frequently, posting a few new pieces every hour. He started working his old contacts, making new ones, started linking to other gossip sites, letting them link to him. He didn't have an Internet connection in his new apartment, so he went to a local coffee shop that had free wireless Internet access, and worked from one of their tables.

He found an audience quickly, advertisers came because of the audience, money to pay his bills came because of the advertisers. He started devoting more time to the blog, getting to the coffee shop before it opened at 6:00 am and sitting on the ground in front of the door so he could get into the wireless network, updating more regularly, sometimes four or five times an hour. People started e-mailing him, he got more scoops, better stories, the media started to notice his site, pay attention to it, get their news from it. An evening tabloid entertainment show did a piece on him and called the site *The Most Hated in Hollywood*. The next day traffic to the site shot up, two three four times more than it had ever been, and the gossip column that he had named his site after threatened to sue him. He had never been sued, didn't want to be sued, didn't have attorneys, didn't know what to do. He was worried after getting back on his feet in LA that everything he had done was going to disappear in a mammoth judgment.

He changed the name of the site. There was a socialite he loved she had a catchy recognizable name she had been involved in a sex tape scandal, an arrest scandal, she had multiple rich famous boyfriends, her every move was documented by journalists and paparazzi. He came up with a Hispanic version of her name that was also catchy, funny, smart. He took advantage of being called *The Most Hated in Hollywood* and put it right on the front of the site, he rebranded himself as the Queen of All Media. He set up the Web addresses so that traffic was directed from the old Web address to the new one. And people kept coming. More and more every day. And the stories kept coming. More and more every day.

He started breaking many of the biggest media, gossip and entertainment stories in the country. Starlet goes to rehab he knew about it first. Actor about to leave his wife he knew about it first. Socialite switching boyfriends he knew, rock star and movie star breaking up he knew, boy band member living in the closet he knew. He had advantages over traditional magazines and TV shows in that as soon as he knew something and could verify it, he could put it up on his site immediately, there was no waiting for another issue to be printed or for the evening's broadcast. People kept coming, more and more, a million a day two million a day three million a day. He started doing TV appearances and other journalists started writing stories about him. Instead of using his real name he started using the name of his site the more it was printed and repeated the more it was recognized the more people came the more people wrote about him the better the stories he got. Celebrity has a sex tape it's about to be made public he knew, a feud between the two stars of a TV show he knew. People kept coming.

He's now as famous as many of the people he writes about, the paparazzi follows him, the media covers him. Between six and eight million people a day come to his Web site, ad revenues are huge, and his brand is worth millions and millions of dollars. Beyond any of that, he loves what he does, loves meeting celebrities, loves covering them, loves breaking stories, loves being the first to know, loves the process of running the site, loves the attention he gets from it. He still works from a table at the same coffee shop where he started, he works twelve-, fourteen-, eighteen-hour days. Fans come by to see him and take his picture and shake his hand, celebrities come by to talk to him and shoot themselves with him for their reality shows. He gets sued regularly, though never for libel or defamation, but now has lawyers who deal with it he's never lost a case.

He can make or break records and bands by posting their songs on his sites with links and positive reviews. And despite all of the success and attention, he's still the same, the same kid who loved to gossip, the same high schooler with a sharp tongue, the same college kid who dreams of acting. He has a TV show a talk/reality show that's going to be on cable he hopes it will lead to roles in network shows, studio films, and eventually, the place he always wanted to be but never dreamed he would find via gossip the Internet and breaking stories, Broadway.