

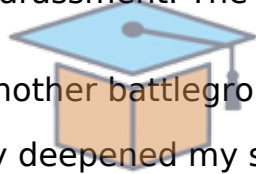
Chapter 33

Chapter 33 captures a time of intense struggle and inner turmoil, where the constraints of the conservatorship drained my energy and joy. Despite my efforts to maintain a sense of hope for the sake of my sons, the reality of being controlled left me feeling like a shadow of my former self. I could sense the fire inside me dimming, and though I tried to hide it, I know my fans could see it too. They didn't know the full extent of what I was going through, but I could no longer muster the energy to put on a mask. The feeling of being so tightly controlled and restricted wore me down, leaving me disconnected from the person I used to be. The spark that once fueled my creativity and passion for performance was slowly being extinguished.

Looking back, I feel a deep compassion for the woman I was before the conservatorship, especially during the time I was recording *Blackout*. Despite being labeled as rebellious and wild, it was during this period that I produced some of my best work. However, personally, it was a difficult time. I had my two young sons, and the constant battle to see them only added to the stress. I now realize that I should have focused on my life at home, even though it was challenging. The constant compromises and deals I made with Kevin just to spend time with my kids felt like a deal with the devil. I was rebelling, yes, but there was a deeper reason for it. Every person goes through rebellious phases, and it's essential to allow people the space to test their boundaries and discover who they truly are. To suppress someone's spirit to such an extent, making them feel like they're no longer themselves, is incredibly unhealthy. It was a test of my identity, and I had no choice but to push back.

What makes this period even more frustrating is the stark double standard between how I was treated and how others—especially men—were allowed to act freely. Male rockstars, for example, were celebrated for showing up late to events and for their wild behavior. Meanwhile, my life was scrutinized for every small mistake, and my choices

were met with judgment and criticism. Kevin, on the other hand, was allowed to do whatever he pleased, even leaving me alone with our young children while he went off to smoke pot and work on a rap song. It felt like he was praised for things that I was condemned for. The contrast in how men and women were treated in the public eye only added to my feelings of frustration and isolation. The paparazzi would hound me, and even after I made a mistake, I was financially penalized. I was forced to settle with one of them who sued me after I accidentally ran over his foot while trying to escape from his constant harassment. The unfairness of it all was overwhelming.



My body became another battleground, constantly under scrutiny, and the criticism from my father only deepened my sense of worthlessness. From a young age, I had been criticized for my appearance, and it seemed like the press and my family never stopped. The constant judgment I faced about my body left me feeling like I could never be good enough. When I was told I had to grow my hair out and get back into shape under the conservatorship, I felt like a shell of the person I once was. Every day, I was forced into a rigid routine—going to the gym, following strict diets, and taking medications I had no say in. My passion for music and performance had been replaced by the overwhelming feeling that nothing I did was enough. Even though I was still performing, the joy I once found in singing and dancing had faded. It had become a hollow routine, and I no longer felt the excitement I once did. The soul-crushing impact of feeling like I wasn't good enough continued to erode my spirit. The mental and emotional toll of the conservatorship was more damaging than any criticism from the media or my family. My father's constant judgment made me feel like I was never going to be enough, no matter how hard I tried.