

ALMOST FAMOUS

KACI BROWN

BY NICK DUERDEN
PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNETH CAPPELLO

A DARING TEENAGE POP THRUSH WHO QUOTES FROM A SELF-HELP GURU AND WANTS TO SKYDIVE

ON THE FREEWAY, about 60 miles outside Cincinnati, Kaci Brown wakes up and yawns. Mild exhaustion notwithstanding, this 17-year-old is incandescently enthusiastic. Her debut, *Instigator*, has just been released and she is on her first U.S. tour, supporting the Backstreet Boys, in her very own tour bus.

"And I'm loving every minute of it!" she gushes in helium tones.

Born in Sulphur Springs, Texas, Brown has the big brown eyes of Bambi and a singing voice that lands her between Jewel and Mariah Carey. And the impressively genre-hopping eclecticism

of *Instigator*—which slingshots from big ballads to energetic pop and low slung R&B—is reminiscent of Gwen Stefani's solo record.

"Ohmygod, do you think?" she screams. "In that case, I officially love you!"

Despite her proliferation of verbal exclamation marks, Brown is an old head on young shoulders, a girl who opted out of school by seventh grade to concentrate on songwriting and who signed her first publishing deal at 13. She also freely quotes from her favorite Christian motivational author, Roy L. Smith—"Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability"

—and reveals that music isn't just a necessary outlet but an emotional crutch.

"It's my escape through hard times and sadness," she says. "I'm pretty deep. In many ways, I'm like every other 17-year-old girl, but because I've been home-schooled and around adults from a young age, I don't share the same experiences, and that can be tough."

Brown is still reassuringly adolescent as she happily confesses that she has a blossoming penchant for illicit temptations.

Tequila shots? Huffing? "I'm talking about skydiving," she says. "I want to go skydiving!"

OUT NOW *INSTIGATOR* DASLABEL/INTERSCOPE

ALL ABOUT ME!

FAVORITE SONG

"Just Want You to Know" by Backstreet Boys

FAMOUS CRUSH

Justin Timberlake—he's an amazing artist and I can't have him!

TYPICAL NIGHT OF DEBAUCHERY INCLUDES ...

Chocolate

MOST DIVA-LIKE DEMAND

Bigger hair

"I'M LIKE EVERY OTHER 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL,
BUT I'M PRETTY DEEP."



SHIRT BY NOMAD TRIBE JEANS BY
PARIS BLUES EARRINGS AND CHAIN
BRACELET BY LISA LEVINE LEATHER
CUFF BRACELET BY DIESEL