

## I am Todd “Toast” Powers

Everyone wonders why they call me “Toast”. If you are willing to listen, I’ll tell you why.

When I was twelve, my life was perfect. I had everything I had always wanted, or at least I got everything a twelve-year-old boy could want. It was one fateful night that totally brought that crashing down, not everything but it sure did get it on a roll. My father, a businessman, currently self-employed somewhere back in Tennessee. His life hasn’t always been the easiest, but he did the best that he could from so little. He graduated high school and got a scholarship to this extremely nice technology school, I couldn’t tell you the name of it, my dad and I haven’t had the closest relationship. I grew up in a tiny county called Knox; it belongs in Tennessee. There wasn’t much to do there while I was growing up, so I would have to use my imagination to amuse myself on a regular basis. My own amusement would usually consist of skateboarding and getting stoned and drunk with my buddies, not a whole lot of productive activities going on around there. My mom kept me in line; we were tight. I loved my mom and everything about her, such amazing ambitions. Her biggest hobby was probably reading magazines, if you could even consider that as a hobby. I don’t know what it was about them, but she just absolutely admired them. She loved the models, the style, the stories, and the tips. If I can recall, her favorite magazine was “Cosmopolitan”. We had thousands of copies of that magazine, just stacked up all over the house. They were even in piles in the bathroom! Every once and a while when I was having my man time on the john, I would read a few articles. I just remember wanting to burn them all, because after a while I just no longer wanted to read about “how to please my man” while I was sitting on the pooper. I’m a dude, I need dude things to read. Truthfully though, I would love to go back in time and see all those magazines in their dysfunctional piles all over our three bedroom rancher. My mother had always wanted to start her own magazine, and one-day her wish came true. I don’t think I have ever seen her that excited, I just remember her hanging up the phone and jumping around screaming and crying and laughing. The phone call she received was from “Nylon”, they wanted to help her produce it but it would be all her own. It took seven months for them to set up an interview date, but her excitement never wore off. They flew her out to New York to speak to some of those really important people to help out with the magazine. I’m not going to lie to you, I read some of her drafts and if I were a chick, I would have read that magazine. The week that she was flying out to New York it was really rainy and stormy. I just remember my dad telling me something about strong turbulence and a broken wing. I don’t remember much about that day, or the weeks that followed. I was sort of like the walking dead, I did everything in a routine so I wouldn’t have to stop and realize what was going on in reality. I focused all my time on helping my little brother, Eric, who was eight years old at the time. I didn’t want him to grow up broken, I love him way too much for that.

From the date of my mother’s death, my father and I became even more distant than we already were. He buried himself in his work, I guess you could say that was his way of grieving. Once I entered Senior High, my social life became the most important thing in my life. I began doing things that parents would not approve of, and they especially would not have wanted me hanging out with their beloved children. Then again, those kids were out doing the exact same things that I was. I began to destroy my

life in the funnest ways possible; I was stoned all the time. “Toasted” as my friends would call it, hence my nickname. I was quite the binge drinker as well. Stealing cash from my own dad to pay for my habits became a simple daily task. I skipped a whole lot of school, I’m a really smart guy though, so I was able to pass by putting in the extra effort after school if I had to.

Once my father became aware of my shenanigans, he got really angry and told me “One more toe out of line, you are out of this house!” I pulled the final straw, being brought home by the police totally wasted and stoned out of my mind did not impress my father. I had no where to go, even my friends didn’t want me around, I was fun to party with but not a good person to bring home to the parents. When my dad was at work and my brother was at a friend’s place I crawled in through the window in my bathroom and raided the house for as much cash as I could get. I hitchhiked my way up to LA, I put myself in the dingiest motel room with all the cash I could afford. I even got myself a job there so that I could pay off my room until I could find somewhere else to go. I decided right then and there that I needed to get my life in order, I enrolled in school. It was called, “Magenta Prep”, the lamest school that I have ever seen. I started right after Christmas break, and six months later I met the most amazing person ever. Her name is Ariana, and she is the love of my life. The first time I looked into her eyes, I knew we were meant to be.

We actually just bought our own place, it’s pretty sweet. The house is really private so no random paparazzo people will see us doing the nasty by our bedroom window. My favorite part of the whole house is our bathroom, it’s so luxurious. I know that sounds really feminine, but I eat my meatball sandwich in there everyday! Ariana hates it when I do that, but she just needs to let loose; live a little I always say. It’s amazing how I am able to afford such a nice house, considering my youth. I graduated in my senior class with the highest GPA, I had honors, and I am currently in my final year of University. I currently co-own a brand new club on the Hollywood strip. It’s a stellar club, lots of celebrities like to come here. The name of it is, “Elektronika”, Ariana loves to come here too, she brings her lovely ladies with her on Friday nights and has a blast. She brings her best friend Jayla with her everytime, I met her when I met Ariana. She has always been such a great friend to me, and she is always there for Ariana when I am unable to be. She is especially there for the girly episodes that I can’t quite understand. My best friend, Tre Johnson, makes appearances and brings girls that looked like they just stepped out of a hustler magazine. He is probably the most ballin’ guy that I will ever know. I remember like two years back though, he went through a rough patch. He got into doing drugs and then selling them, he’s cleaned up his act and is no longer into that stuff anymore. I’ve always had a lot of friends in high school, and now plenty working here at the club. I’ve been told that I am extremely charismatic, I’m guessing that’s a good quality to have, it sure keeps my lady satisfied. What I’m really getting at is that I don’t have many enemies, I only have one. His name is Sebastian, and he is the biggest pervert I know. He used Ariana before she met me, and I’m not even going to get into what he did to her, it’s disgusting and immorally wrong. If I ever see that kid around without his little prep posse, I’ll beat him into the dirt.

When I was younger I used to dance hip-hop for fun, because like I said before, there isn’t much to do in Knox. So, last year I volunteered to teach it to a bunch of kids, it was a blast. I love kids, they are so full of energy. I can’t wait until Ariana and

I get married and have kids. I got really busy and I no longer have time to teach that class anymore. One day, I'll do it again, just not right now. The only thing that I have time for in my spare time right now is Ariana's music, I'm learning to DJ, and I'm trying to help her with her raps. I'm making up the beats. It's really fun, and it's productive, quality time together. I love doing it, it's beginning to be a new hobby. I wouldn't even mind starting to mix house music. I wouldn't do it without Ariana of course; my life would be empty without her. Now you know my story. But please don't pretend you know me, because you don't, you know about me.

Kelsea Graham