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48 LW: I was definitely closest with my bigger — my older sister. We shared a room
49 together and I was really attached to her growing up.
50

51 JL: So, what was your favorite activity to do with your sister?
52

53 LW: I guess clean the house we — and I definitely enjoyed cleaning the house with her.
54 She would turn the stereo all the way up. Music would be blasting; we would be, like, mock
55 singing in brushes and brooms. And yeah, that's, like, some quality time I spent with her just,
56 like, cleaning up listening to music. She's, like, a really good singer so, like, I would listen to her
57 sing and I would just admire her. Yeah.
58

59 JL: Could you describe your hometown community for me?
60

61 LW: Um, yeah so, I grew up in Opa Locka, Miami, Florida. What's more like City vibes.
62 We grew up in a house, so I love being in the backyard. I love being — I love playing on the
63 block with my friends who live down the block. We would bicycle we would play in the — I
64 really love to play outside and play in the grass and find rocks and flowers. I was kind of nature
65 kid, so like, I had a lot of fun with what the Earth provided basically going up. So, um, yeah that
66 was mainly my experience growing up. We didn't — I didn't do a lot of walking in the
67 neighborhood it was just really like that one block that I lived on. And yeah. And I actually went
68 to school — I went to an elementary that wasn't too far from my house so sometimes I would
69 walk home from school with my older brother and that would be nice. And we would have a
70 candy lady that — we would go to the candy lady house. And we would go to the candies lady's
71 house and we'll get — I'll get a frozen cup that was like \$0.25, and then we'll buy like a bag of
72 hot chips or, like, some hot sausage just like Southern snacks and stuff like that. And that was,
73 like, my favorite part about getting off from school; going to the candy lady house it — going
74 home and being able to just have fun in my yard. Yeah.
75

76 JL: Very Cool. So, I'm going to fast forward a little bit, um, could you tell me about what
77 you were passionate about in high school?
78

79 LW: Oh, in high school I kind of already had it all figured out honestly. Like, I feel like
80 in high school I had it so much more figured out that I've ever had it. (Laugh) I knew exactly
81 what I wanted — I know exactly what I wanted to do. I know — I knew in high school that I
82 wanted to pursue some level of arts and that's what pushed me to figure out what college should I
83 go to, like, I don't. Um. I wanted to go to a college that it wasn't so pressured. Academics weren't
84 so pressured. So, I knew that I wanted to be an actress, I knew that I wanted to do crafts, I knew
85 that I wanted to share my talents and my gift with other people who are just willing to just, like,
86 listen and watch deal from what I was experiencing or what I gave them you know? Yeah.
87

88 JL: How did traveling back and forth from Jamaica to Florida influence or impact all of
89 your artistic endeavors in high school?
90

91 LW: Woah, Jayce. So, freshman year I was stuck — I didn't get to — I was stuck in
92 Jamaica when classes started in Miami for my freshman year in high school. I was stuck in

93 Jamaica for like four days into the school semester and I was like, how am I going to get home?
94 Like, my mom bought me a one-way trip and then she was like, yeah I'll buy you another one,
95 you know what I'm saying? And then the prices went up and then there weren't no tickets, so I
96 end up starting my freshman year like four days later inside of, like, the school semester. And I
97 feel like just being in Jamaica and growing up every summer it's helped me feel a little bit more
98 connected to the Earth. I've definitely been more connected to the Earth and, like, and especially
99 because I have — I'm, like an Earth energy, like, I'm a Virgo so I'm more connected with the
100 Earth and more connected with the sun — and I learned a lot from growing up in Jamaica. I
101 understood the way that my parents grew up. My parents weren't weren't born in America and
102 they didn't — they — they didn't experience the luxuries that I was experiencing growing up.
103 And I understood what that was for them and I understood what they were giving me. They were
104 giving me a gift being able to experience such luxuries. And I also really enjoyed being in
105 Jamaica. I enjoyed their life. I enjoyed sometimes, like, having to go catch water and — and
106 bring it home and bring it inside the house and bathing with just a pan of water. I enjoyed the
107 simple living that — you could say simple living — I enjoyed that.

108
109 JL: Very cool. That's — we're going to jump back to that later but we're going to move
110 on to: what were your expectations when you graduated from high school?

111
112 LW: Wow (sigh) my expectations. I was planning on — like, I wanted to leave. I wanted
113 to leave Miami. I wanted to go and explore the world. I was just like; I want to go and travel.
114 Like, I want to see something else besides Miami and I'm going to try something different. I've
115 never lived — I never even, like, growing up, really visited places that were cold or ever, like
116 snowed. So, moving to Chicago was, like, a big deal. I was like, oh my God. I don't have any
117 family here. I'm going to move to the snowy city. I got to get a coat. I got to get some boots. Um,
118 and my expectations — I wanted to heal. I came to Chicago to heal and to, like, dive into the
119 arts. Dive into what, like, I really want to do and give myself this time and space to grow and just
120 be who I want to be. Yeah.

121
122 JL: Yeah. So, in addition to wanting to get out and — and explore, what else influenced
123 your choice of Columbia College Chicago?

124
125 LW: So, my mentor Ms. Stewardson, my Drama teacher in high school, was a big part of
126 that. She was like, I experienced Chicago as a young adult, and it was just amazing. She was
127 like, you should try something. You want to go somewhere different? You want to go
128 somewhere new? Then you go to Chicago. And me and my classmate we booked the flight all by
129 ourselves, we booked The Airbnb, and we booted it to Chicago for like 3, 4, 5 days. And we
130 were high school students having and enjoying and spending, like — this my first like girls trip
131 and I was just so happy to be in another city — in this big city, I'm this small girl — and have
132 fun and yeah so it was it was — Ms. Stewardson told me to come to Chicago and experience
133 what Chicago has to offer and she was like, yes Columbia College, you could try Columbia
134 College, so I was looking at — I was looking at Roosevelt University and then I was like, I think
135 Columbia kind of fits my speed a little bit more. And I'm going to see what they've got to offer.
136 So, I went to — we have, like, they have an open house meeting at Columbia. You can tour the
137 buildings and just like experience it. And I met someone who was a senior at the time at
138 Columbia and I just fell in love. I fell in love with her experience at Columbia, like, she went

hard for Columbia. She's like, yes, like, you want to be here. And I was like, you know what okay I like this I like being here I—I can do this. And that's when I made my decision.

JL: Great. So, you came here, and you immediately started getting cast in so many shows.

(La Sheba laughs)

JL: So, what did you learn from your first show at Columbia?

LW: Oh, my goodness. My first show “Meanwhile on the Outside” I was playing — it was — the characters were all colors. Their name was — you had different colors and my color was white. What I learned from the first show was definitely how to take direction. Even more, like, this on a — on a higher scale. It was nice being able to work with the choreographer and a director. I’d never done that before I don't feel like — and I work with the choreographer and the director and we made this piece from scratch and I fell in love with how intimate that was. It was so intimate. It is so intimate creating art when it's just three actors, one choreographer, one director. It’s just five of us and we're creating this experience based on this play. And what also made it special was because the play was written by a senior — a playwright senior — at Columbia so. And then it was also the— the play was about black women so I connected with the work and I — I felt like for the first time I can do — I can — I can tell my story. I can tell my story. I can perform my story. And that this was a space that I can do that you know? So, I— I appreciated Columbia after my first show. Just being able to give artist just the possibility to dream big and to see that you can see yourself on stage and your story can be told on stage. Yeah.

JL: Yeah that perfectly segues into my next question. Um, you were in “Young, gifted, and Black” at Columbia College and you worked with Don Renee. So, can you tell me bou— can you tell me a little bit about your experience working with Don Renee?

LW: Oh, I loved working with Don Renee. It's so powerful to have a black direct— a black woman director teaching you, and directing you, and also analyzing because she's also a Virgo (laughs) and you know we can't forget about the Zodiacs because they play an important — important role. She analyzes what you bring to the table and then she's like okay I know who you are as an actor. Now I'm going to give you this, and I'm going to give you that, and I'm going to challenge you, and I'm going to push you so that you can bring more to the table next time or even now or you can rise to the occasion. So, I liked — again also I really like that we curated pieces. It was so beautiful. This was a text that, we were all readers and we were all saying these lines, but how could we curate this and make this creative and make this come out beautiful? How can we do it and be empowered? And Don Renee gave us that empowered feeling. She helped us put — not only put — these words in our mouths but put it in our hearts and make us actually feel it. And I think that's a p— one — one beautiful experience that I've experienced coming to Columbia is just being able to work with Don Renee. That's — I — that's amazing to me.

183 JL: Yeah. Yeah. Okay so let's move a little bit away from the art side of Columbia and
184 more towards the liberal arts part. Uh, how much of a structural role do you think that Columbia
185 and your education played in your life?
186

187 LW: So, I would say that Columbia pay-plays a big role in my life. It structures
188 everything that I do. What would I do with my day for the past four — three and a half — four
189 years? Whether I go back home to Miami, if I can come back going to class everyday —
190 especially when I used to live on campus— was just everything. My whole life was—is—has
191 been school. Has been Columbia. And whatever is happening, whether we're having a parade or
192 someone's protesting or something is going on with the school that plays a big part in my life.
193 What I think about, what I'm interested in, how I see myself in the world. Yeah so, I would say
194 that it plays a big role. It has been playing — Columbia has been playing a big role in my life.
195

196 JL: Yeah. So, then when did you first become aware of the virus — of Corona?
197

198 LW: So, it was probably about two months before it all went down. My boyfriend
199 mentioned to me that hey, like, there's like some, like, virus going on where people are, like,
200 dying and people are, like, getting sick. And I was just like, huh? What are you talking about? He
201 was like, yeah; it's happening in China. I'm like, huh? Like, I didn't hear about this. Mind you, I
202 do not watch the news. I'm like the most artsy wartsy that I don't even, I don't even pay attention
203 to media that much. But that's why he does it. (Laughs) He pays attention to the news and he lets
204 me know. And he was just like, yeah this is going on. I'm like, (clicks tongue) really? I don't—
205 that's—that's going on? And then two months later now everyone's talking about it I'm like,
206 okay well I guess it's the big deal, and then I got the email when I got the email I was like, okay
207 well I'm kind of happy I didn't go to class today. (Laughs) Yeah.
208

209 JL: Yeah. So, other than your boyfriend, what media or new sources — now — do you
210 get your information—
211

212 LW: —So, I have been I've been getting news from my mom. Again, I don't watch the
213 news. I don't even look for it honestly. I have been getting some stuff from Harold — Harold
214 Washington newspaper on my email, but otherwise I don't check for the news. I kind of rely on
215 my family to let me know what's going on or if I'm actually in danger. (Laughs)
216

217 JL: Then where were you when you learned that Columbia was transitioning to remote
218 learning and kicking everybody out of the dorms?
219

220 LW: I was home. That specific day I didn't go to class. I wasn't feeling good that day and
221 I was like, you know what let me stay home, and I got the email and I was like, okay, and then I
222 — I've been home kind of quarantined since then. And I got the email that we're going online
223 I'm like, wow. And talking to other people and they're like, hey, my college is also going online
224 and we're all like switching and I was just like, what? How are we going to do this? how's this
225 going to work? So yeah, that was — it was kind of like in that same, like, maybe a week later I
226 found out while I was home.
227

228 JL: And now that everything is online, how do you feel that your level of productivity has
229 shifted?
230

231 LW: (Sighs) Oh my goodness. So, I — I have been going through a lot of challenges
232 since the beginning until I can say about now. So, it's been about a month or two and I was
233 experiencing challenges being productive: getting work done, getting to — having to — have to
234 hop on the laptop at a specific time, getting homework done. Because home for me is a relaxing
235 place. Home is where I create, home is where I sleep, home is where I enjoy and taking away
236 that — that level of getting ready, getting all your books together, having to go to class, picking
237 up some coffee on the way, going to class and being in a space where there's a desk, there's a
238 chair, and you're ready to get work done. You're around the people who also wants to get this
239 work done and it's like you're motivated when you're around these people. And being at home all
240 of that's gone, so productivity went — we can say it was a 1-10 meter from going from nine
241 productivity I went to at least like a seven. Yeah.
242

243 JL: What productions were you in before Columbia closed, if any?
244

245 LW: So, I auditioned for American Menu and I didn't get the role, but I told myself I was
246 like 'okay if I don't get mainstage, I am going to just do senior showcase and that's it. I'm going
247 to enjoy my senior year, I'm going to do senior showcase, I'm going to focus on graduation.' So
248 I was doing Senior Showcase and we auditioned, we've been meeting up with the people, we've
249 been meeting up with the chair of the theater department, we've been meeting up with Wendy
250 Webber, we've been meeting up with Noel, we've been meeting up with other actors in the city
251 who want to help us and then that all stopped. it all stopped for a good while because this is also
252 extracurricular activity compared to what we're doing as, like, our schedule. At least the
253 mainstage you have — that — that's a course — you can also get credit for having a mainstage.
254 But Senior Showcase was strictly extracurricular, and I didn't hear an email from them maybe
255 not until, like, after Columbia kind of settled and then a week later. It was like, hey we're going
256 to, like, you know, see what are the steps that we can take to move forward, and I was not happy
257 about that. I was bummed because this was something I'm looking forward to — It's my senior
258 year and I want to perform. I want to perform on stage, and I want to get — I want to get the —
259 the exposure that I know I need for my career. So, having to move that online has been also
260 challenging for me. I was resisting it for a while, even resisting getting on Zoom class. Just like,
261 why do I have to do this, like, oh my gosh like I'm not comfortable. And then I've been just
262 slowly pushing myself — slowly pulling myself — towards it and opening up to being
263 technology, and being zoom, and Via see each other through FaceTime via record self-tape my
264 auditions and my monologues to send it. So, yeah. (Laughs)
265

266 JL: You mentioned this kind of, um, gap in communication. How have you been
267 communicating with your professors as a whole?
268

269 LW: So, I've been communicating with my professors email same way I've been doing
270 before. I guess some — some professors are emailing back right away, and some are also taking
271 their time so it's kind of like a fluctuating between like how fast you get back to each other, but
272 it's just been through email for now.
273

274 JL: And how do you feel that these professors have shifted the amount of work that you
275 have to do?

276
277 LW: (Coughs) Excuse me. For some of my courses it's definitely helped and then for
278 some courses is like I got more work. Or it feels like more work, um, because we're not in class
279 being able to do that and getting that Hands-On learning. I specifically learn through Hands-On.
280 I learn — you're in front of me you're doing something you're talking to me about something. It
281 helps me when I see you and I can see you in front of me doing it. So, it was also harder for me
282 to be like okay you can also teach me by (laughs) me seeing you somewhere else (laughs). Um,
283 so, yeah.

284
285 JL: How do you feel that this shift has affected your mental health and your wellness?

286
287 LW: Oh. (Sigh) Again, this was challenging. I resisted this a lot. It's so, like, I'm such an
288 intimate person so when I go into class, I feel safe in the intimate environment. But, for me going
289 on Zoom, it kind of, like, shifted. I was just like, wait this is not what I'm used to I don't know
290 how this is going to feel and I got a lot of anxiety from — for getting on Zoom and having to
291 complete assignments or having to have meetings with my teachers via Zoom. I don't know if it's
292 because I'm in my home I feel uncomfortable or feel, like, out of place, but I went through a lot
293 mentally having to switch to that. I got depressed and didn't want to participate actually. I didn't
294 want to participate. And then I started talking to my counselor and our first session was like me,
295 like, balling like, look I'm going through this, like, I don't know if I'm going to graduate.
296 (Laughs) And then it turned to let me see the positives. How can I still get things done and how
297 can I open myself up open my heart to something new? So, yeah.

298
299 JL: Yeah that totally makes sense. When Columbia announced that they were going to be
300 canceling graduation or postponing it or —

301
302 LW: (Sighs)

303
304 JL: — what they have in place. Do you feel that Columbia should be doing something
305 extra for graduating students?

306
307 LW: Yes. I feel that way. it kind of feels like, you know, I'm graduating but I don't have
308 that, like, that excitement of like, oh my family is flying from Miami and Orlando and wherever
309 Jamaica to come and see me walk across the stage. Moving to Chicago — I've been away from
310 my family a lot and this was a sacrifice I made for myself to do this for me. So, walking across
311 that stage symbolized completing something, you know? It would bring so much more
312 celebration. So now that I am not in my hometown — I am still in Chicago trying to finish up it
313 doesn't feel like I'm graduated, you know, it feels like I'm just trying to push through. And that's
314 why I feel like they should do more for the graduating seniors. We — we — the seniors only
315 experienced having the — our new space our Student Center for what? One semester or two
316 semesters? Like, we're, like, we didn't get to ex — we're not going to be able to experience what
317 everyone else is experiencing. Manifest. I've, every year, been enjoying everyone else's
318 Manifest and I'm like, where's mine? I want to enjoy my Manifest so, you know, we should be
319 doing more. Whether it's postponing the graduation and also giving us what you have the budget

for. You know? Because you have a budget for graduation, and you have a budget for Manifest. All of that currency was supposed to be given to us and I just feel like it's a cop-out of just saying that, okay we're just going to— sorry we're going to do this all through technology. I feel like we also deserve that currency — that currency exchange. We've poured into this college, this University, we've poured into this place. Now can you pour into us? Could you pour into us to celebrate? And however, which—whichever way you do that. But please do it. (Laughs) Please do it. We need it. And I — I need it you know?

JL: Yeah. How — how do you think, um, or how well do you think Columbia communicated with seniors during this time period?

LW: (Sighs) I feel like everything has been for everyone besides our — the graduation and having to do this online emails. We haven't gotten any other type of communication. Anything special for us I believe — besides what already is happening which is like we have our commencement poetry award competition, and they're doing videos now to put together for the senior experience, and college experience — but I don't feel like we got anything specialized for us seniors. It's been just like okay well this is happening buckle up tight. You know? You're almost out of here.

JL: So, speaking of this communication train of sending emails to everybody, how did the announcement that the college was closing its dorms — how did that impact your living situation?

LW: So, I moved off-campus my junior year, so I was not impacted by the living situation, thank God. But I do share the stress of having to move into the dorm and having a day to come out, so I do feel for all the students that were living on campus. Because I know that it's not easy to just pick up and move all of your stuff within the matter of two days and some people even got less, I think, time to do all of that. And I know how much money that also takes. Storage, U-Hauls all of that extra currency is what we're talking about. (Laughs) All that extra currency that we also have to give out for this to happen. But I wasn't affected. I have a one-bedroom apartment and my living situation hasn't been affected.

JL: Just for the record, Columbia students have to sign up for an hour-long time slot to move out of their apartment. Just to put that on recording. So, how did the quarantine change your relationship with your family?

LW: I guess the quarantine — it went, it was, like, rocky because I was supposed to be in Miami for spring break for my mom's wedding, so we were going to have some serious family time (laughs) and things just changed. You know we have been Face Timing and our relationship has always been like FaceTime, calling on the phone. But, since quarantine, I guess it's a little bit more frequent. I have — I'm more — I'm home more — I'm home so we can have conversations more often, but I do miss my family. And I know that they miss me too. Yeah.

JL: That's very sweet. Um, could you describe a day in your life, um, now that we're quarantined?

366 LW: So, I guess I'll — if I describe a day, I'll describe today. I woke up this morning and
367 I got some water — I love to drink water early in the morning — and then I went on my porch to
368 do yoga. Did some yoga. I did a little work out session, little morning workout. I'm so happy that
369 the weather is changing, the sun was out beating directly on my porch. I was so grateful. I was
370 able to do that, make some breakfast, take a shower, and do my skincare routine. Okay, that's
371 what's important. Moving, getting some sun, and drinking some water, getting some good
372 nutritional food, and taking care of my body, and taking care of myself. That's something that
373 I've been developing since I've been in quarantine. How can I have a perfect schedule, a perfect
374 morning routine, that makes me feel good? Because before that I was just lying in bed, wake up,
375 watch Netflix, something's on TV okay homework to do — do my homework and then like have
376 a headache because I wasn't taking care of myself. Wasn't eating on time. so that's something that
377 I've been bringing together. More structure where structure is gone. Create the structure for
378 yourself and move forward, you know?
379

380 JL: Yeah it seems like this structure you're creating is all based in wellness practices
381 which brings us back to that idea of — of connecting to the Earth which I think is just such a
382 beautiful statement. So, I was wondering, is there any other ways that you maintain wellness
383 practices at home?
384

385 LW: So, I have been doing — lately I've been on a zoom chat with my cousin and with a
386 couple other friends that believe in the same things that I believe in. And we have been having
387 these — it's called ancestral healing circle. And we've been talking about spirituality, esoteric
388 things. We've been talking about our ancestors, even talking about how—what can we do to heal
389 during this time? What can we do to meditate? What are some tools and practices that we can
390 use? And that has been helping me so much opens — open myself more to talking on Zoom
391 being comfortable because I didn't have a friend base that I was doing that with. So, having
392 friends and being able to connect with them on this space helped me open up and I can say that
393 that within itself was a form of self-care and self-love for me. It's like being able to reach out and
394 also give that energy someone who wants it and also deserves it.
395

396 JL: Very well put. It seems like this idea of wellness is — is something that surrounds
397 you in day-to-day life and I know you have — you're a part of Lioness Unleashed. I was
398 wondering how y'all have been navigating around this new Zoom situation, this online world, or
399 if you have been at all?
400

401 LW: So, the ancestral healing circle is a section from Lioness Unleashed. So, this is us
402 coming together and revamping what Lioness Unleashed is and creating a tighter knit
403 organization so that when we launch — when we launch Lioness Unleashed to the world, we
404 have something with a stable foundation. So, it's been really good to also connect with the other
405 people that sees a stream — see the stream of empowering women, empowering people who feel
406 feminine energy. And also accepting masculine energy within it as well because we've had some
407 male counterparts join our zoom meetings and it has been great it has been lovely to connect
408 with other people and create another structure and place to connect. Yeah.
409

410 JL: Yeah. So, in addition to Lioness Unleashed you also have your own Beauty business.
411 I was wondering how that's been affected by the pandemic?

412
413 LW: (Sighs) So, it's been so hard for me. Um, with this whole pandemic I've been facing
414 financial struggles, but I am so grateful that I have an online business. So, it definitely helped
415 most of my in-person sales. And me doing hair, and doing different services, that helped with me
416 sending out my products and sending out what I've made and being able to also gain that
417 monetary value through an online business. And I've been grateful for that and I've been
418 surviving thank God. (Laughs) So, I'm grateful but it has affected my business. I have taken a
419 couple clients because I've had to, but they all come with their masks and I have hand sanitizer
420 readily available for them so that's been good. That's been something different and a little tricky.
421 When I do hair, I like to be personal and be close with my client in the way that they can feel
422 comfortable with just looking in the mirror, looking at their hair being transformed, and also
423 cleaned. So, it's been a big change. And, especially for my regular clients, they're, like, they want
424 things to be like how it is but I'm also kind of maintaining that distance so that we know that
425 okay, we can't get too close if we are doing this, you know? I can't get too close to you. I can't be
426 too much in your face because I don't want to, you know, impose and I don't want you to impose.
427 And also, just maintaining — because I do have an in-home Salon — maintaining cleanliness
428 and disinfecting when people come in when people come out. That's also been an addition to
429 what I've been working with. But I've been managing it well.

430
431 JL: How do you feel you're going to approach all of this this beauty world once things
432 start opening up and things become a little more normal? Are you still going to be taking these
433 intense precautions?

434
435 LW: I—I do like the whole fact of disinfecting and cleaning up, which I've always done.
436 But I—I really like intimate and personal connection, so I don't feel like I'll be taking too much
437 of this precaution. I think that this precaution is blocking us from really being able to connect
438 with one another right now in this time. So, when this is all said and done, I'll be going back to
439 regular Goldie, regular La-Sheba.

440
441 JL: Very cool. Very cool. So, how has social media impacted your life in quarantine?

442
443 LW: Social media has been something to, you know, waste a couple minutes — waste
444 some time on. But it has been really fun watching the Tik Tok videos with my friends dancing
445 and stuff like that. And I, personally, haven't been on social media much as per se as like me
446 posting or telling the world how I feel. I've been really personal and intimate during this time.
447 I've kind of just been enjoying everyone else and I'll share something every now and then on
448 Snapchat or something like that, but no I haven't been doing any videos and stuff like that. But I
449 have been enjoying it and I do like that, you know, on social media — as far as the holistic scene
450 and the wellness scene on Instagram — you're getting information. A lot of people are putting
451 out information that can help you. Different recipes; different herbal blends that can help you
452 take care of yourself during this time because it is important. Um, workout videos. Stuff like that
453 just, you know, stuff to motivate you.

454
455 JL: You mentioned on your bio data form — and, unfortunately, I can't remember her
456 name — but you mentioned that one of your mentors, or someone you look up to you right now,

is a social media influencer. So how has she been interacting and how have you been influenced by the way she's handling everything?

LW: Well she's been going on lives and doing live streams. She invited me on a livestream actually. It was kind of like a party livestream on Instagram, so that was cool. I was a little nervous, but I'd — I did it and I was happy that I did it, happy that I had a little fun of interacting with people. She's been really big on, like, brand marketing — how to market her brand — and it's been helping me. It's been giving me a lot of inspiration, and also a lot of courage that when we do get out of this, or when I am ready to really be full forth with my brand on Instagram consistently, that I have someone to look up to and I can ask for advice. That's really important to me that I have someone that, hey, like, I can send this, like, hey, what do you think about this? Just having like a creative group where, um, we can share what we are interested in and what we're working on.

JL: Yeah that seems to be a very big idea in your life — is everything you do try to find these communities which I really appreciate. I think that's really valuable. Um, how often do you go outside?

LW: So, at the start of quarantine I was staying inside because it was cold. It was quite cold but now, since it's been warming up. So, I've been going outside to the past week or two as much as I can and now that I do — I do have a porch. I'm so grateful that I have a porch that I could just, like, open my back door, and sit out on my porch, and now I'm outside. So, as much as I'm feeling. It really depends on the weather. So, like today I was outside for, like, this morning and I was so happy that I kind of got a little tan. And I was like yeah, we're doing something, you know? I'm in Miami chilling right now. (Laughs) So, as much as I can. As much as I can.

JL: Yeah. And where do you go? Do you go to go places or is it just mostly hanging out in your porch around your house?

LW: It's usually hanging out on my porch, hanging out downstairs, or going to the store. I haven't been going anywhere else. I've been confined (laughs) to just home, store, porch, li—um, downstairs that's it.

JL: And what precautions do you take when you do go to the store?

LW: So, something that's really important for me when I go to the store — I love to hand sanitize my hands. I particularly don't care about the mask but now they have a declaration saying that we have to wear masks going to the store. I went into Dollar Tree today and I could not go in without a mask so, that was okay. I was like, alright I understand. But I specifically make sure that I put hand sanitizer on my hands when I am leaving the store, when I get in my car, when I get out my car — hand sanitize my hands — when I go inside the house I hand sanitize, and then I wash my hands when I come inside. Keeping cleanly — cleanly hands and not touching my face and also not really touching anyone else, you know, that's a precaution that I've been taking.

503 JL: Have you noticed a difference in the way that people treat you when you are outside
504 now that there's all of this extra rules?

505
506 LW: Yes. There is so much awkward subtleties that you experience in the grocery store
507 sometimes now. I was in Walgreens and I apparently forgot that it was the, like, the six feet
508 meter and this older lady turned around was like, you need to step back you need to step back
509 you're not—you're in my — my box. And I was just like, okay I'm going to step back I'm sorry.
510 But I kind of got mad because I was just like — like, I'm sorry I didn't even know. And she just,
511 like, overreacted but I was like, yeah. Some people are like a little loops, like, it's serious for
512 them. So, I have to understand other people's boundaries and maintain my distance. it's been a
513 little weird and even some cashiers — I — I feel it for the cashiers, mainly because they're
514 interacting with people constantly all throughout the day. So, they have to, like, keep their masks
515 on, they have to wear their gloves, and have to keep on hand sanitizing throughout their workday
516 and I know that it's more stressful for them. With just being like, oh my gosh this is also
517 happening — happening — a pandemic is happening, and I also have to still interact with people.

518
519 JL: Yeah. So, with that idea of essential workers are there any essential workers living in
520 your home?

521
522 LW: No.

523
524 JL: Well that's very lucky.

525
526 LW: (Laughs)

527
528 JL: So, when do you think that people will stop — okay let me rephrase that — when do
529 you think that people will be a little bit more relaxed? I know you mentioned the grocery store
530 incident. Do you think that that will stop anytime soon?

531
532 LW: I personally feel like we will probably experience this until the end of this year
533 going on to next year. People are not going to fully be less fearful until social media, until the
534 news, until the government says that, hey you know everything's good. I think that's what people
535 are waiting on. And I personally am not waiting on the government to tell me that, you know,
536 everything is good everything is great because I know my immune system and I know that I'm
537 taking the precaution. I'm not getting germs on me. I'm keeping everything clean. So yeah, I
538 don't think people are going to be the same for a while after this. I think this de—you will see the
539 effects of this later on. That's my opinion, and I'm going to be the one that's just watching
540 everyone because I personally, like, I'm personally making sure that I'm not fearful of what's
541 going on. Because I don't feel like — I know that fear mindset only brings destruction to you.
542 Fear is not good to be thinking about. You shouldn't be in fear. And I feel like this pandemic has
543 brought a lot of fear, especially to the older Generations, you know? Because their immune
544 system is a little bit more compromised. Yeah.

545
546 JL: Yeah. Um, how do you think that these effects — like you said these lasting effects
547 — will impact the entertainment industry specifically the theatre industry?

549 LW: So, my mom told me that they would — that they said on the news that actors would
550 be also betraying these things in the movies, and you will see that people don't want to be too
551 close to each other. I personally don't agree. I believe that artists we understand that there is a
552 risk with working to each other. Theater is about play. Period. It's about play, and how could you
553 play with yourself? How could you play with others? So, I feel like actors would assume the
554 position of taking the risk and creating and portraying real stories. Now, if the story is based on
555 this pandemic, then obviously you know that would be a part of it. but I personally feel that it's
556 only going to make theater play a little bit more cautious in cleanse—cleanliness. That's the only
557 thing and, like, being more cleanly and, like, because you know we sweat a lot when we're
558 playing. So, maybe like just being precaution of, like, sweating on someone or rubbing our sweat
559 on someone else when we're playing. (Laughs) Um, that's about the only thing I think that actors
560 are going to come in full force to be like, hey you're a person, I'm a person, you have bodily
561 sweat, I have bodily sweat — let's play. Yeah.

562
563 JL: Yeah, yeah. So — just for reference — in Chicago a lot of the main stage theaters
564 right now have pushed productions until 2022. How does that make you feel? How do you feel
565 about the approach to putting off entertainment for a couple of years?

566
567 LW: Honestly, I'm about to create my own theater company. That's how I feel. I'm about
568 to start my own company, and I'm about to create my own theater because I feel like we — we
569 play a very important role in showing humanity, like, showing the world — showing that, the
570 world that we are humans and that we are living with inhumanity. And we are — we display
571 emotions to help people remember to connect, so pushing back entertainment — especially live
572 entertainment — I think it's only going to bring more harm than it will bring good.

573
574 JL: Yeah. I agree with that. Um, so let's move on into the more reflective section of the
575 interview. Do you think that Columbia would be providing you with a high-quality education
576 whether or not it was remotely or in person? And why do you feel that way?

577
578 LW: I feel like Columbia is providing me a very high-quality standard of learning.
579 especially in person. (Laughs) And, um, the reason why I say that is because our teachers are
580 working in our fields — most of the time — and we are getting legit second-hand knowledge
581 from the source — you know — of who's actually experiencing, who's actually doing it. And I
582 don't feel like you can get any better than that, you know? A lot of our teachers are genuine.
583 Especially our artists. They're genuine in how they give us information, in how they bring us into
584 their world as much as they can. So, I — I love — I love the — the type of education that we get
585 regarding to the Arts. Yes.

586
587 JL: Do you, when you look back on this situation — on going online for a semester, is
588 there a specific class or a specific teacher or faculty member that you're going to remember as
589 handling the situation very well?

590
591 LW: I can't say that I have a professor in mind that really handled the situation to what I
592 would say standard — a good standard. Um, I feel like it's kind of been a little all over the place
593 because Zoom is great. Zoom is working for us great, but sometimes when it's in a larger setting
594 it's not the best. When there's a lot of people on. And, yeah, this is — this semester for me has

595 been difficult regarding professors, and how to get information, and how to get my learning
596 correctly in the way that I feel like I'm learning and I'm spending my semesters earnings on
597 something great. So yeah, I can't say I have a actual Professor.
598

599 JL: Yeah. So, with all these struggles how do you think that Columbia could have better
600 supported the students — specifically you?
601

602 LW: I personally feel like an all—an all pass policy should have been permitted to all
603 students, reason being we are going through a pandemic and there are more important things than
604 just education right now that needed to be handled. I experienced death in my family since this
605 pandemic and I haven't been able to be there for my sister. Her husband passed away and I
606 haven't been able to be with my family. And staying in one place and having to worry about
607 classes that doesn't have to do with what's happening right now, I feel like is, um, I guess it's just
608 I feel like it's just taking us out of what we need to be connecting with. If that makes any sense. I
609 feel like I should be connecting with my family. I feel like I should be with my family. I feel like
610 I should be using this time to enjoy life instead of slaving and trying to finish these courses
611 online that aren't 100% mapped out that we are — we are trying to figure it out. And I feel like
612 it's just a college — the college's way of not wanting to pass everyone and also not wanting to
613 refund us our money for the half of the semester because I do deserve that. I do believe that we
614 deserve half of our semester's earnings back. Yeah.
615

616 JL: What would you say to dr. Kim?
617

618 LW: I would say that humanity is more important right now than online education.
619 (Pause)
620

621 JL: All right. Period.
622

623 LW: (Laughs)
624

625 JL: How has your outlook on equality changed during the pandemic?
626

627 LW: (Sighs) My outlook on equality has always been skewed because of my experience
628 living as a black woman in America. But, since this pandemic has happened, I only—I only want
629 generational wealth for my lineage, and my family, and my people in my race. I have been
630 struggling financially, which I shouldn't — I particularly believed I should have been —
631 shouldn't have been struggling financially, and things would be different if I had generational
632 wealth and that—if my family was already set. So, I'm working towards that. A lot of things
633 that's happened in the past does not define us but has definitely put us in some limitations. And
634 inequality since this pandemic has just showed me that I need to take care of what I need to take
635 care of for myself. Because I don't think that the government — I know that the government's not
636 going to have my back. My boyfriend filed for unemployment and it's been about a month and
637 we have not received anything, or I think about two months actually. We haven't received
638 anything. We haven't received any payment. The only thing that has come in was a stimulus
639 check and that only took care of rent and food. In particular for me, I did get a stimulus check
640 because I'm in school because my mom can file me as dependent, so I haven't been getting what

I've — I think — I know I need to survive. And I've been doing it on my own like my mom has been doing it on her own her whole life, you know? So the game hasn't been set for a win but I'm so excited about the future and about setting up my children in my generations to come for a line of wealth and some other way that they can say that I can just live my life and I don't have to worry about working to earn a living to survive. Yeah.

JL: Yeah. I truly feel like you are extremely passionate, and dedicated, and — and smart so I — I really do feel like that's going to happen for you. If anyone can do it—

LW: (Laughs) —Thank you, thank you so much Jayce.

JL: What aspects of life did you take for granted before quarantine?

LW: I took for granted that I could just go over to my friend's house and hang out with her, hang out with them, or hang out with him. I took for granted that I could just, like, get up and just drive to wherever I want to go to and enjoy the beach or just go to the mall. I took all of those things for granted, and now that I'm home I'm not taking for granted the fact that I can create within my house with what I have here. That was really important for me, not taking for granted what I do have in my Arsenal. What I can create, and use is magic. So yeah.

JL: Yeah. So, when you look back on this year or however long this is going to last — when you look back on this time of life, what do you feel that you will view as your most significant change or shift during this time?

LW: My most significant shift during this time is connecting more through technology. Because I grew up in Jamaica, and especially like the — I ran into a time where we didn't have washing machine. There was gas stoves. You have a washing machine. There was things that we had to do that didn't really involve technology. I didn't get a phone until I was in like the fourth grade or so, and now that technology is booming and we are experiencing it, like, I would say that my connection with my technological devices I guess is a little closer now and I understand that it's a — it's a tool to help me connect and to get things done. Yeah.

JL: Um, what will you remember as your biggest loss from this time period?

LW: Not being able to perform on stage, going out from Columbia and not getting to see the agents and the agency's faces when they finish when they see us perform, Not being able to talk to them afterwards and get that one-on-one head start to my into my career. Um, that's the only thing that I'm going to view as, like, a I wish I would have had that, or things would be different if I did have that.

JL: How do you feel about the future of everything?

LW: You know what, I feel like the future is going to be great. I feel like the future is going to be lit [slang], but we have to go through some, you know, downs. We have to go through some ups and downs especially with humanity and how we interact with each other, how we deal with each other. That's most important. We need to come together more of a more as a

community all over the world honestly and eliminate the fear of strangers, eliminate the fear of crime and violence, eliminate all of that, and eliminate the fear of race, and come together and connect. So, I — I have high hopes for the future. I have high hopes for the world that we live in because this is a supernatural world and magic is always happening whether you want to believe in it or not. (Laughs) So, yeah.

JL: Yeah so how do you feel we can achieve these things — whether through the government or through just humanity as a whole — how do you feel that we can go about creating this future?

LW: I would say switching more to solar resources. Using the sun's energy to help run this Earth. We're still drilling into mama's — mama's Earth for oil which technically is the Earth's blood. (Laughs) We're drilling into the Earth for a resource that is nonrenewable that you can't keep on — you know what I'm saying? It's—it's not like the Sun — so we need to build our houses a little more eco-friendly — friendly. We need to get rid of the processed foods in America because, let's be honest, they have addicted — they have made people addictive to these processes and these sugars. We need to get rid of that because it's not promoting better health and better living and even more conscious living. These foods aren't good for our human bodies, so we need to go back more to the basics — back more to like when I was growing up in Jamaica. Simple living and connecting more — connecting more — eliminating the fear of violence by black men, by black woman, by any other race, or anyone terrorists, we need to eliminate that fear and we need to step into the unknown and connect with each other because that's all we need. We need to connect with each other so we can build a stronger bond so that we can have a strong government or a strong system that will work. I personally feel like the police system does not work as it has never helped me personally as a human being living in this world. It has never helped me. So, I don't believe that's a system that should still be even up and running. We need to reform and change some things, but it's not going to just take what La-Sheba — what La-Sheba has to say. It's going to take everybody and that's why I think it's Community is important because everybody — every single person has a little bit to add, a little spice to add to a whole pot to make it taste good. It can't just be me, or it can't just be the government. It can't just be the police system because not everyone's the same. So, we need a little bit of everyone to make this world work and so that we can all work together so they won't be any homelessness, so there won't be any more poverty and malnourished children. We need Community that's what helps each other.

JL: I totally agree with you. Going back to this idea of helping out people who are less fortunate during this time — do you feel, looking back, that the government has helped or do you feel that they should have done anything more to help people who are less fortunate during this time?

LW: Yeah. Um, I — especially — especially in Chicago, Jayce, I haven't seen any big trucks pull up with giving out food. I haven't seen anything. I haven't seen anything in the South Shore community at that. There are people that are homeless. I haven't seen any government giving out — hey we're going to set you up this place, hey we're going to set you up that place. I just feel like there's more that they can be doing straight from the military forces that they have to come in and help us and, just for us to have that communication and that — hey, I'm going to

733 come and bring water for everyone in the neighborhood who can come and line up and get it —
734 because I would line up and go get that water. (Laughs) You know? I would line up and go get
735 that water. If there was a truck that came out and was like, hey, we're coming to feed you all.
736 That shows us that you care. That shows us that you, you know, care about our well-being and
737 our life. So, things like that.

738
739 JL: Yeah, yeah. So, to kind of bring this whole interview to a close, I just wanted to ask is
740 there anything else that you'd like to say or is there anything else you'd like to speak on?

741
742 LW: I would speak on the fact — I'm talking back about what we're eating during this
743 time. It's important that we're eating what's — what came from the earth. Vegetables, fruits,
744 grains, nuts, seeds, anything that's coming from Earth planet Earth. So, I would — I would
745 recommend anyone and everyone to eat a vegan diet, and to maybe learn more about the
746 different herbs that are provided to us from the Earth to help our immune systems. And kind of
747 get rid of this Pharmacy mentality that we have to go to a doctor. Sometimes we don't have to go
748 to doctor, sometimes we can just listen to what our body needs. So, just to a more wholistic life
749 and a way of living will always also help our community come together and also help everyone
750 else feel like they can connect to Earth in some way. Yeah.

751
752 JL: Yeah. Do you think that this idea of living a more healthy lifestyle — specifically in
753 terms of food — do you think that that should be pushed or held off until quarantine is over? Just
754 considering the fact that a lot of the fruits and vegetables that people have access to in grocery
755 stores are not coming from local sources and can be contaminated in some kind of way. How —
756 how is that impacting your ideas of wellness and healthy living?

757
758 LW: Specifically speaking to the fruits and vegetables that we're getting imported; I
759 would say the best thing that you can do is wash your fruits and vegetables and prepare them to
760 be nourishing to you. Because in some way shape or form it came from the earth so in some way
761 shape or form it's nutritional for you. We do have a problem with GMO and just not being able
762 to trust that. That — also that fear of trusting where things are coming from. And I feel like we
763 connect with each other more. That fear of trusting where this is coming from would kind of melt
764 away a little bit. I was my—my—my cousin, she's an herbalist, and she was talking to me she
765 was like, you know, I don't buy everything organic. And I was like, huh? You don't buy
766 everything organic? Like she was like, no I also I believe that if it came from the earth it doesn't
767 have to be organic, I know that it has a properties of what the Earth gave it to grow. And I was
768 like, okay I'm going to start thinking about what I eat and what I buy. That, okay, maybe if I
769 don't have the money to buy organic today and I have to get regular fruits and vegetables and
770 regular herbs from the store. I'm going to put the intention that what I'm getting is from the Earth
771 and if the Earth made this, and it bloomed, and it's ripe, and it's ready to eat, then that mean it's
772 going to be — then it's going to be beneficial for me. Yeah.

773
774 JL: We've talked a lot about-different ways can connect to the Earth like
775 meditation, yoga, healthy diets — things like that. What would you say is the best way, or
776 perhaps your favorite way, to connect to the earth?

778 LW: My favorite way to connect to the Earth is legit having fun with what's here. You
779 can go outside. Any tree that you see there's flowers — flowers are blooming right now. I
780 actually went out the other day and I picked dandelions and flowers from the trees that are
781 blooming right — right by my apartment building. And just enjoying the fact that wow
782 something is sprouting from the earth, so pretty for me to admire. It can be as simple — as
783 simplistic as that. Hugging the tree. Touching the tree. I'm like, hey I see you, you're also live
784 just like me. It's just — it's that simple because I was actually out there and there were people
785 looking at me, Jayce, like I was crazy picking these dandelions and touching the tree, looking at
786 the flowers. I'm like. oh my god this is great, like, I'm enjoying myself. So, just simple things
787 like that. People are looking at me like I'm crazy but it's just as simple as enjoying and admiring
788 what nature has to offer and what is nature giving us. Nature is changing daily. Everyday
789 something different is happening in the world. Each day you go outside. So, pay attention to it
790 because we're living, the Earth is living, everything is living so pay attention to it. It's not just
791 human to human it's also human to Earth to water to fire to air to — you know what I'm saying?
792 These are the elements that we're living in that helps us breathe, survive, eat, live. Yeah.

793
794 JL: I think that that is a beautiful way to end this interview, so I just wanted to say thank
795 you so much.

796
797 LW: Thank you.