Spotlight Stories

September 29, 2015 By Li'l Man Old Navy

Hi! My name is Li'l Man Old Navy a.k.a. Li'l Man Khan. I've been in the Kiki scene for three years now. I started off walking performance the first year coming into the Kiki scene. Old Navy recruited me, but performance wasn't my only interest. I wanted more.

At some point in my life, I went through a lot. Things were not working out and I became homeless. But I had dreams to become a better person. I never wanted to slip into doing any type of risky behaviors that involved stuff like sex or drugs. So, I ended up staying at my gay father's house, so I could better myself and get my mind on the right track. This was the best outlet to keep me focused on the bigger picture.

Before I started walking runway, I remember bringing it up to my father and he was like, "No." I explained to him that I could do it because not only did I graduate in vocal performance; I also had a head full of creative ideas that didn't need to go to waste.

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He eventually let me walk the Runaway. For me, it was a way to let all my frustrations out. It was therapeutic. I let out all my demons through the Runway. I got myself together to walk the Pink Lady Ball and I had a lot of support doing it. That night, I walked out of there with my first grand prize.

We all know that Runway isn't a cheap category, and I knew that for me being homeless, it would reflect through my Runway, my character, and my effects.

In order to build a better effect you need money. I didn't have the money to do that.

A lot of people, including my father, wanted me to worry about finding work rather than walking balls. But I couldn't just focus on that alone. The memory of being kicked out by the man I moved up here for still lingered on. So, any outlet with positive energy did me good. By walking Runway, I was able to channel all that frustration into building a better me. It gave me strength.

So, I filled out several job applications and I was lucky to get a job. When I got my own place a couple of months later, I knew then that my visions would come to life! I won't lie. All this was not

easy. At one point it got so hard that I almost gave up and moved back home. But my father kept on telling me, “New York is where I should be,” and he was right. So I listened, sucked it up, and made what I thought was impossible happen.

I’ve always heard stories of how people fall, lose all hope, and end up putting themselves in risky situations like unsafe sexual behaviors and abusing drugs. I had people who believed in me and kept me focused. I didn’t steer down the wrong path. I know it’s not easy out there. I made it and so can you. It is possible!

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