

From Rags to Swag: A Biography of Clifford "T.I." Harris

Rapper T.I. (a.k.a. T.I.P. or Rubber Band Man, and born Clifford Harris Jr.) was born September 25th, 1980¹, hailing from Atlanta, Georgia (a.k.a., dirty south, ATL, or the now rather antiquated Hotlanta) and began rapping at the age of nine². He was raised by his grandparents, who obviously didn't appropriately care for him because by age thirteen, he had turned to selling crack for lunch money³. T.I. had already been arrested several times at the tender age of 14⁴.

Soon discovered and signed in his late teens, he released his debut album, "I'm Serious⁵," on June 26th, 2001⁶, which, for reasons unbeknownst to me, received a lackluster reception, causing the ungrateful morons at Arista records to drop him from the label⁷.

Also in 2001, T.I. met Tameka "Tiny" Cottle⁸ who would become the mother of his two sons, Clifford "King" Joseph Harris III, born August 25th, 2004, and Major Philant Harris, born May 16th, 2008. The couple finally married in Miami on July 30th, 2010⁹.

During the interim, T.I. dropped several singles and records, including 2005's Urban Legend, King in 2007, and, upon release from prison for federal weapons charges, his most successful album to date, Paper Trail, which contained the homage to gold digging hos, "Whatever You Like¹⁰". These three albums catapulted T.I. to the top of the charts (e.g., he blew

¹ I was born June 25th, 1980, numerologically making me a life path 22 and he a 7, which, according to tokenpath.com, makes us a match, "almost made in heaven."

² That same year, I was granted a speaking part in my school play, Once Upon a Shoe.

³ When I was 13, it would not be unheard of for me to spend my lunch money on weed.

⁴ I was apprehended in Nordstrom for shoplifting when I was 14.

⁵ I'm also serious.

⁶ The day after my 21st birthday. It was like he *knew*.

⁷ Only two short years later, I, too, was dumped by an ungrateful moron.

⁸ Bitch.

⁹ Proving my point that T.I.'s grandparents failed him due to his unawareness of the truism, "Why buy the cow when you can get the milk for free?"

¹⁰ Regarding this, my sentiment is best summarized by girl group, Blaque's, 1999 one-hit-wonder, *Bring It All to Me*, which states, "Oh baby, bring it all to me/ But I don't need no fancy cars or diamond rings/
Oh baby, bring it all to me/ Gimme your time, your love, your space, your energy".

up, got paper, cheese, or scrilla, big pimped, or came from the bottom and then he was there). In his own words from his 2008 collaboration with living legend, Jay-Z and god, Kanye West:

You kick it like me, no exaggeration necessary
 Living revolutionary, nothing less than legendary
 Gangsta shit hereditary, got it from my dad
 Flow colder than February with extraordinary swag¹¹

Today, T.I. is one of the most renowned and successful rappers of the 21st century¹² and continues to top the charts, most recently with his work on one of the biggest songs of this summer, “Blurred Lines,” in which he collaborated with the likes of Robin Thicke, Pharell, and Justin Timberlake¹³. This MC’s star continues to rise, and I predict many successes to come, including more leading roles in blockbuster films, mogul status on par with Russell Simmons and Swag (a.k.a. Sean “Puffy” Combs, P. Diddy, Puff Daddy, or just Diddy¹⁴). While T.I. will inevitably suffer the heartbreak of divorce after he catches his wife, Tiny in bed with fellow artist of diminutive stature, Lil’ Wayne, he will ultimately find love again, with a woman whom he shares a baffling amount of connections¹⁵.

Until then, we, the world at large, will continue to enjoy his skills and swag, as well as the physical perfection that is his face and physique. T.I. is not just King, not just an Urban Legend, he is man who got on his grind and stayed on it since childhood to make it to where he is today¹⁶.

¹¹ I have expensive sunglasses.

¹² Success hasn’t passed me by, either: As a child I won first place in a coloring contest, I made the cover of the Seattle Times when I tried out for American Idol (no, I didn’t meet Simon. It’s a complicated process and this is not the time nor place), and see also footnote 13.

¹³ My karaoke rendition of “Blurred Lines” has received an amount of applause not to go unnoticed.

¹⁴ Did he what? Just kidding.

¹⁵ It’s me.

¹⁶ The exact coordinates of which I have yet to find.