



# be.

ISSUE 79

JLY 2026

**COVER STORY:**  
**MAHSA ZOKAE**  
*by Gerard Richardson*

Who profits from trends  
—and who gets left  
behind?

# RISKS. LESSONS. REALITIES.

**The Currency of Cool.**

Issue 79/ 2026 — RISKS • LESSONS • REALITIES.

Featuring a new generation of talent developed by  
SixElement Entertainment Group under the direction of  
Diana Mupereri.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

# THE MYTH OF THE OVERNIGHT MODEL

**Why preparation is the most glamorous thing nobody wants to  
talk about.**

By Diana Mupereri

We live in a generation that celebrates arrival but rarely  
acknowledges preparation.

We applaud the campaign. We repost the runway. We celebrate  
the film premiere. We announce the signing, the magazine  
cover, the breakthrough role.

But somewhere between the applause and the achievement,  
there is a chapter that almost nobody talks about.

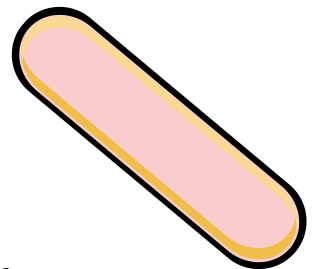
The becoming.

This story is for every aspiring model, actor, performer, and  
creative who believes they are behind because success did not  
happen in six months.

It wasn't supposed to.

Welcome to Issue 79.

— **Diana Mupereri**  
*Editor-in-Chief, Justbe Magazine*



“The first year is not about becoming famous. It is about becoming undeniable.”

# THE MYTH OF THE OVERNIGHT MODEL.

The first mistake many people make when entering fashion and entertainment is assuming that talent alone is enough.

The second mistake?

Believing that everyone else figured it out faster.

Social media has convinced us that success happens overnight.

*One viral video.*

*One agency signing.*

*One campaign.*

*One runway.*

*One Netflix role.*

*One moment.*

Yet behind nearly every "overnight success" lies years of preparation, rejection, uncertainty, education, reinvention, and patience. Industry professionals consistently emphasize that sustainable careers are built on development, professionalism, and understanding one's market rather than instant visibility.

The truth is simple:

Preparation is not the obstacle between you and success.

Preparation is success. And unfortunately, it is the least glamorous stage of all.



# THE FOUNDATION NOBODY POSTS ABOUT.

Nobody posts the countless self-tapes.

Nobody posts the unanswered emails.

Nobody posts the waiting rooms.

Nobody posts the weekends spent learning how to walk, pose, speak, negotiate, present themselves, or understand contracts.

Nobody posts the moments of questioning whether they are even on the right path. What people see is the outcome. What they rarely witness is the construction.

**The truth is that modeling and acting are professions.**

*Not aesthetics.*

*Not hobbies.*

*Not lifestyles.*

*Professions.*

And professions require foundations.

Doctors train.

Lawyers study.

Athletes practice.

Artists develop.

Models and actors should be no different. The industry does not simply reward beauty. It rewards preparedness.



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“Not every opportunity is your  
opportunity. Maturity is  
knowing the difference.”

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CREDITS:

Model: Tanveen Kaur Sagooi  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

# REJECTION IS NOT A DETOUR. IT IS THE ROAD.

Perhaps the most painful lesson in fashion and entertainment is this: You can do everything right and still hear no.

No.

Not today.

Not this campaign.

Not this season.

Not this role.

Not this brand.

Rejection is not evidence that you lack talent.

More often than not, it is evidence that creative industries depend upon variables outside your control.

Timing.

Height.

Chemistry.

Brand identity.

Market needs.

Creative direction.

Availability.

Casting professionals repeatedly stress that rejection is a normal and unavoidable aspect of creative work, even for established talent.

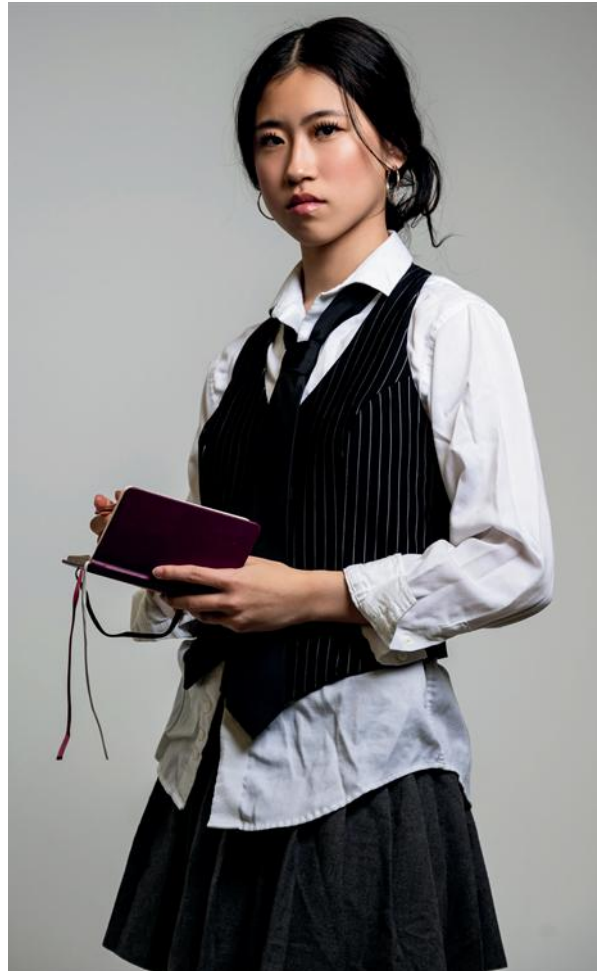


The healthiest professionals understand something important: Rejection is information. Nothing more. Nothing less.

The audition that did not work out may simply have been pointing you toward a different path. The agency that declined you may have protected you from a partnership that was never right for you.

The campaign you lost may have created space for something better aligned with your identity.

The industry rarely explains this to newcomers. Instead, people internalize rejection as inadequacy. And that is perhaps the greatest tragedy of all.



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CREDITS:  
Model: Natalia Opara  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson



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CREDITS:

Model: Natalia Opara

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

# THE BUSINESS SIDE NOBODY TEACHES

Many people want to become models. Very few want to become modeling professionals. Those are entirely different ambitions.

Understanding contracts.

Learning usage rights.

Negotiating rates.

Building relationships.

Maintaining professionalism

Showing up on time.

Managing finances.

Protecting your image.

Reading agreements.

Understanding commissions

Learning taxes.



These things are not separate from creativity. They are creativity's infrastructure. The Model Alliance and other advocacy groups have spent years pushing for greater transparency, timely payments, and stronger protections because many creatives enter the industry without understanding the systems surrounding their work.

The dream cannot survive without structure.

Talent alone cannot protect you.

Knowledge can.



“Beauty may open a door.  
Professionalism determines how  
long you remain in the room.”

A man with dark hair and a light complexion is looking through a dark wooden frame that has an 'X' shape across it. He is wearing a bright red jacket with a collar and a pearl necklace. The background is a solid pink color. The text 'be.' is in the top right corner.

be.

CREDITS:

Model: Bhavesh Samjiskar  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

be.



CREDITS:

Model: Bhavesh Samjiskar

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

# PATIENCE IS A PROFESSIONAL SKILL.

The waiting period is rarely discussed. Yet it defines most creative careers.

Waiting for callbacks.

Waiting for responses.

Waiting for opportunities.

Waiting for campaigns.

Waiting for growth.

Waiting for yourself.

Social media has conditioned us to believe that speed equals success. It does not. Some people bloom early. Others bloom sustainably. The difference matters.

There is no award for arriving first if you cannot remain.

The goal was never visibility.

The goal was longevity.

And longevity demands patience.





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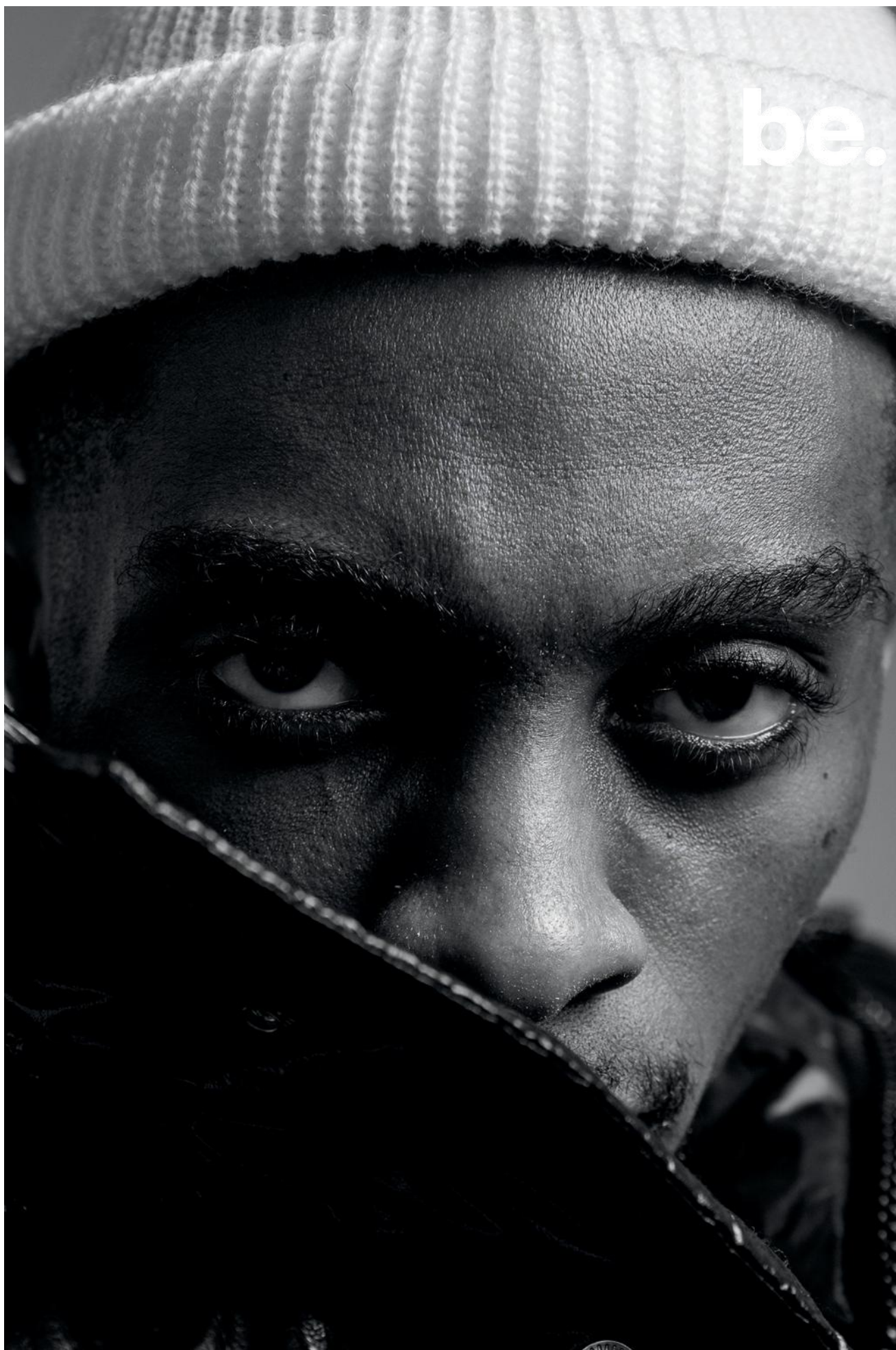
“The industry rewards  
visibility. Life  
rewards endurance.”



be.

CREDITS:  
Model: Natalia Opara  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

be.





CREDITS:

Model: Frank Ngu Mungu Nelly  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson



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CREDITS:

Model: Frank Ngu Mungu Nelly  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

# STOP COMPARING YOUR BEGINNING TO SOMEONE ELSE'S MIDDLE.

Perhaps the most damaging habit among emerging talent is comparison.

You compare your first year to someone's tenth.

Your first casting to someone's established network.

Your first portfolio to someone with global representation.

It is unfair.

It is unreasonable.

And it is deeply human. But growth requires perspective.

The model walking international campaigns today may have experienced years of rejection before being recognized.

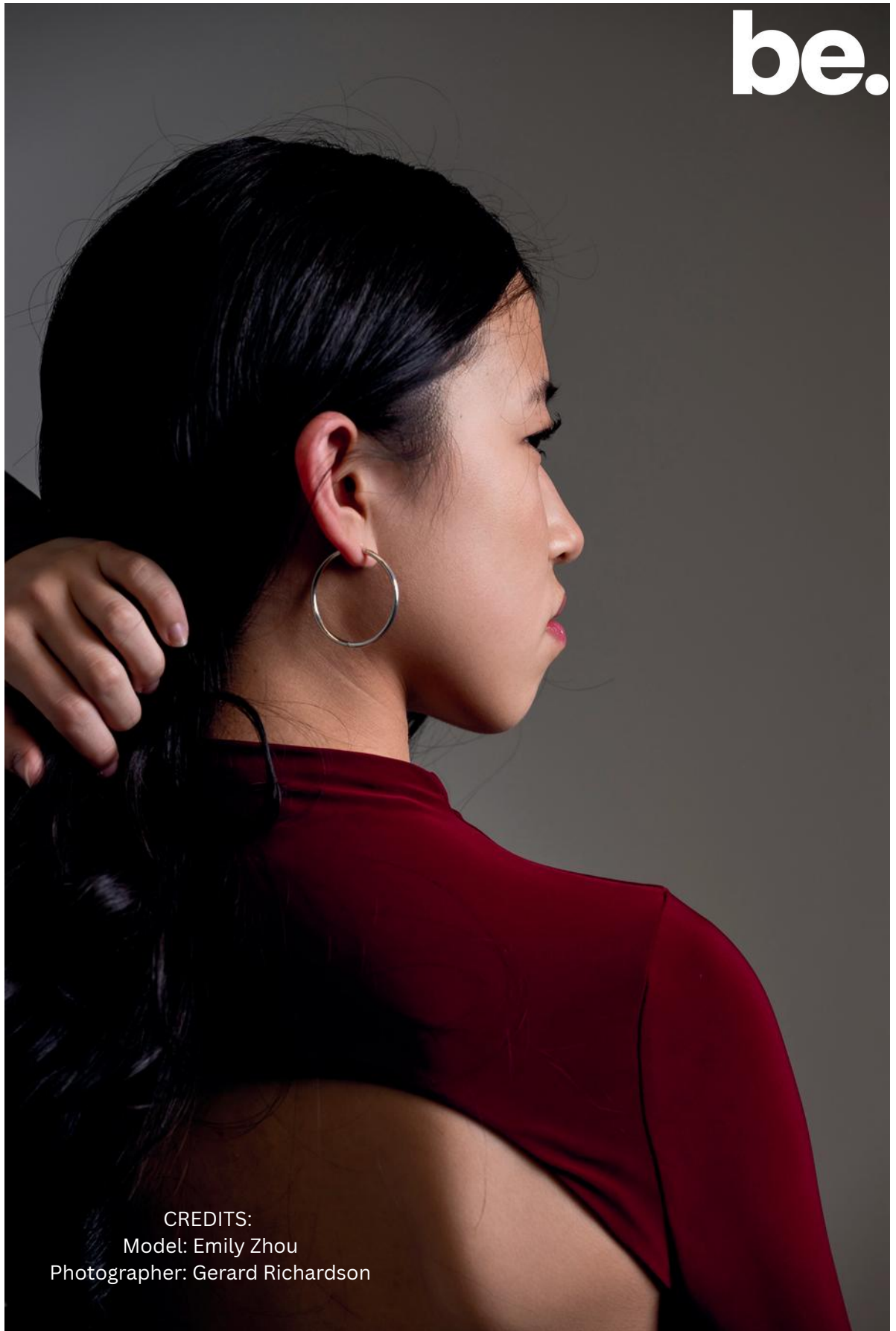
The actor receiving awards may have spent a decade auditioning without consistency.

The stories we celebrate are often edited versions of reality.

The struggle rarely makes the highlight reel.



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CREDITS:

Model: Emily Zhou

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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# PR PEP

## BEFORE PURSUING PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION:

### KNOW YOUR MARKET

- Commercial
- Editorial
- Runway
- Beauty
- Lifestyle
- Fitness
- Acting

### BUILD YOUR FOUNDATION

- Professional digitals
- Portfolio development
- Basic runway training
- Posing practice
- Self-tape skills
- Industry terminology

### UNDERSTAND THE BUSINESS

- Contracts
- Image rights
- Agency commissions
- Taxes
- Invoicing
- Personal branding



#### CREDITS:

Model: Kate Robinson

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

# PREP

**BEFORE PURSUING PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION:**

## **DEVELOP YOUR PROFESSIONALISM**

- Time management
- Communication skills
- Reliability
- Emotional resilience
- Networking abilities

## **PROTECT YOUR WELL-BEING**

- Mental health practices
- Financial planning
- Support systems
- Balanced expectations

**PREPARATION IS NOT GLAMOROUS.**

**IT IS ESSENTIAL.**



# TO THE PROFESSIONALS ALREADY IN THE ROOM

This conversation is not solely for newcomers.

It is for agencies.

Designers.

Photographers.

Producers.

Casting directors.

Mentors.

Industry leaders.

We must stop romanticizing struggle. We must stop withholding information under the guise of exclusivity. We must stop pretending that confusion is a rite of passage.

Transparency benefits everyone.

Prepared talent performs better.

Informed talent sustains longer careers.

Supported talent contributes more meaningfully to the ecosystem.

An industry built upon mystery inevitably creates exploitation.

An industry built upon education creates professionals.

The choice belongs to all of us.



A man with dark hair and a slight smile is looking upwards and to the left. He is wearing a white t-shirt with a small grey Adidas logo on the chest. He is holding a blue and yellow tennis racket in his left hand and a black towel with a yellow geometric pattern and a tennis ball logo in his right hand. The background is a plain, light grey wall.

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CREDITS:

Model: Bhavesh samjiskar

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

be.



CREDITS:

Model: Bhavesh Samjiskar

Photographer: Gerard Richardson



CREDITS:

Model: Jahleena Chambers

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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CREDITS:

Model: Jahleena Chambers  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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CREDITS:

Model: Tanveen Kaur Sagooi

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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CREDITS:

Model: Tanveen Kaur Sagooi

Photographer: Gerard Richardson



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CREDITS:

Model: Junior Sakish Joel Eyong Tarlishi

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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CREDITS:

Model: Junior Sakish Joel Eyong Tatlisi

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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CREDITS:

Model: Mahsa Zokaee

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

# THE NEW DEFINITION OF SUCCESS

Success is not merely being seen.

Success is understanding your worth.

Success is building slowly.

Success is protecting your peace.

Success is learning to survive rejection without losing yourself.

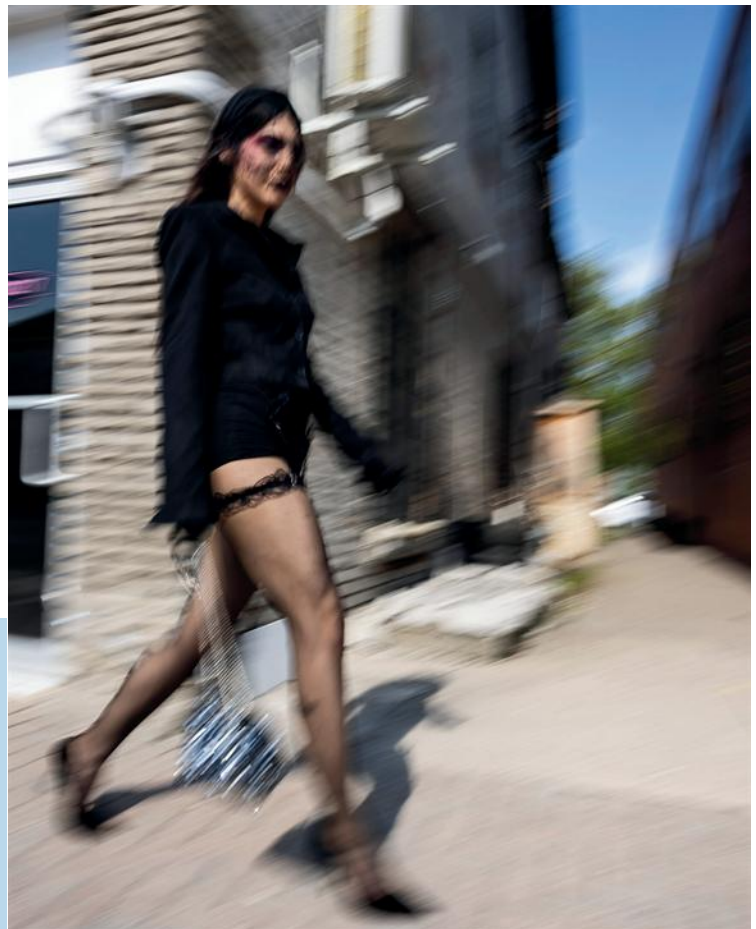
Success is developing a career rather than chasing moments.

Success is recognizing that preparation is not the waiting room before life begins.

Preparation is life.

Preparation is work.

Preparation is becoming.



“

The dream is not the destination. The dream is becoming the kind of person capable of sustaining it.

”

be.



CREDITS:

Model: Mahsa Zokaee

Photographer: Gerard Richardson



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CREDITS:

Model: Mahsa Zokaei

Photographer: Gerard Richardson

be.



CREDITS:  
Model: Sonja Serences  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

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CREDITS:  
Model: Sonja Serences  
Photographer: Gerard Richardson

