

## Got A Problem?

By Gwendolyn Baines

Ask Gwendolyn Baines national author and lecturer and syndicated NNPA advice columnist.

Dear Gwendolyn:

For the past 25 years, I have been in the music business. My sister and her husband started a business at that time. They made money. In fact, they became rich. This is the problem: During the years of their moneymaking, they never offered to assist me in any way with my career. Now they are broke. He spent the money on his family and on ladies of the street, not to leave out his drinking buddies. They all got the money. Last week, I had to stop my sister from constantly saying "we" can do this and "we" can do that. I found it most irritating. My record was released a few months ago and is rising up the charts. I dare my sister to think I am stupid enough to allow her to become involved with my life at this point. I have struggled so hard and for so long. How can I get rid of her?

Robert

Dear Robert:

Hold your money and she will go away. You don't have to disconnect her as your sister, but just don't connect her with your bank account. She didn't connect you to hers. Let her know you have no intentions of bringing her into your success. Let me tell you this: I want you to be sure to have an accountant. You will need to hire two. You know. An accountant to audit the other accountant. I also want you to enroll in a business course. Remember this: Don't get so busy recording and performing you fail to look after your financial affairs. Too many artists end up broke without a dime to spend due to this type error. Oprah Winfrey has often stated that when she informed Bill Cosby of her talk show deal, he told her to sign her own checks. Robert, think about it. Money can go away fast when you entrust someone else to control it.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Gwendolyn:

I have a 15-year-old son who is adopted. Biologically, I am his great-great aunt. His mom was only 14 when she gave birth. After he was born, his mother became homeless. When she tried to enter a shelter, the owners realized how old she was and called Social Services. The Social Services said they had a place for a baby and a place for a teenager, but not a place for a teenager with a baby. So, I did what I thought was the only thing I could do at the time. I took the baby, for a short time, I thought. She would not stay in the foster home and went on to have other babies. A short time grew into years, and I adopted him when he was 9 years old. Now he is 15 and is the worst child ever. He got put out of school for cursing the teacher. He has grown very disrespectful to me. I am afraid he is depressed, thinking life is dealing him a bad hand. He has been seen by a psychiatrist and school counselor. Nothing seems to help. Is there anything I can do? Since he was eight, I've had him in church where there is also a mentoring group of men who help on Saturdays. Gwendolyn, I feel that I gave 15 years of my life away.

Rose

Dear Rose:

Your life is not an isolated one. You are joined by millions of elderly women rearing a second or third generation. When you make a decision, as you did at that time, you can never predict the outcome. (I want you to read "Keys To Parenting Your Teenager" by Don Fontenelle, Ph.D., 2000.) Reaching the mind of a teenager in today's time can be most difficult. Years ago, parents could discipline their children without the interference of the law. As you mentioned, you have given 15 years of your life to this disrespectful child. Don't give up on him — and most important — don't give up on your own happiness. He must come to appreciate you and others real soon. Let me tell you this: Teenagers are committing murder at an alarming rate. They are killing mothers, fathers, siblings and even great-great aunts. So, be cautious. The genes of his mother could be dominant causing him to have no love and concern for anyone — not even himself. Rose, think about it. He did not get the bad hand. You got it. His hands have always been held by the fingers of love — yours.

Got a problem? Ask Gwendolyn Baines. Write to her at P.O. Box 78246, Nashville, TN 37207-8246, and send a SASE for prompt reply. Email her at gwenbaines@hotmail.com.

## Wesley rises in 'How She Move'

By Kam Williams  
Sentinel-Voice

After studying at the Las Vegas Academy of Performing Arts, Rutina Wesley attended the University of Evansville where she received her bachelor's in Theatre Performance. Next, the attractive Las Vegas native matriculated in the Drama Division of the prestigious Juilliard, performing in productions of "Macbeth," "Richard III" and "The Winter's Tale" to "The Marriage of Figaro," "Rebel Armies Deep into Chad" and "In the Blood," among others.

Rutina also spent a summer studying Shakespeare at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and she landed the title role in a production of "Romeo and Juliet." And since graduating from Juilliard in May of 2005, she's exhibited such an impressive emotional range that Oscar-winning director Sam Mendes cast her opposite Julianne Moore in the Broadway production of "The Vertical Hour."

So, it's no surprise that the charismatic young actor was tapped to make her screen debut in the lead role of Raya Green in "How She Move." Here, the promising young star of tomorrow talks about this inspirational, inner-city saga. She plays a prep student who has to return to her crime-infested ghetto neighborhood when her parents can no longer afford the tuition.

KW: Given your classical training, what interested you in this script?

RW: Honestly, when I read one of the first lines, which was, "Chocolate-stained skin," I was immediately drawn to that, because I'm a dark-skinned female, and it's something that I've, my whole life, struggled with, being considered too dark by some, and all that stuff. But I also just related to Raya because she's very driven; she's passionate; she sets goals for herself, and she goes after them on her own terms. I think that as a young lady you start off not knowing what you want to do, and then you kinda arrive at yourself by the time you're 17 or 18, hopefully. And that's what I did. In high school, I was figuring out what I wanted to do, and by the time I was 18, I settled on being an actress, and began seriously pursuing that goal.

KW: Where are you from originally?



Local talent Rutina Wesley stars in high-energy movie.

RW: I grew up in Las Vegas, born and raised.

KW: Soon after Juilliard, you landed a role on Broadway as one of the five original cast members in "The Vertical Hour." How was that experience?

RW: That was one of the most amazing experiences of my career, because a young actor could not ask for anything more than to work with people of the caliber of Sam Mendes, Julianne Moore and Bill Nighy. They're so good at what they do, I learned so much just by watching them. And they treated me like

family. I was very, very, very lucky to have that opportunity. It was one of the greatest experiences I've had.

KW: Now you're in "How She Move," which is so much more than just a dance movie. It has a richness and depth, which reminded me of "Love Jones."

RW: That's how I feel about it, too. The dancing is great, but there is this beautiful little story behind it that's positive and hopeful for our community.

KW: I was very pleasantly surprised by the movie. It even made me cry. And you

did a great job.

RW: Wow! Thank you. I'm really glad you enjoyed it. Wow! Thanks.

KW: Did you identify with your character, Raya?

RW: Definitely. I had definitely made sure that I got out of Las Vegas after high school. I knew that if I stayed... I wouldn't have been able to pursue my dreams as an actor or dancer. My family always told me to dream big, so I made sure that I got out... and explored new places, because the world is huge. And I'm still learning new things every day in this business and in my life.

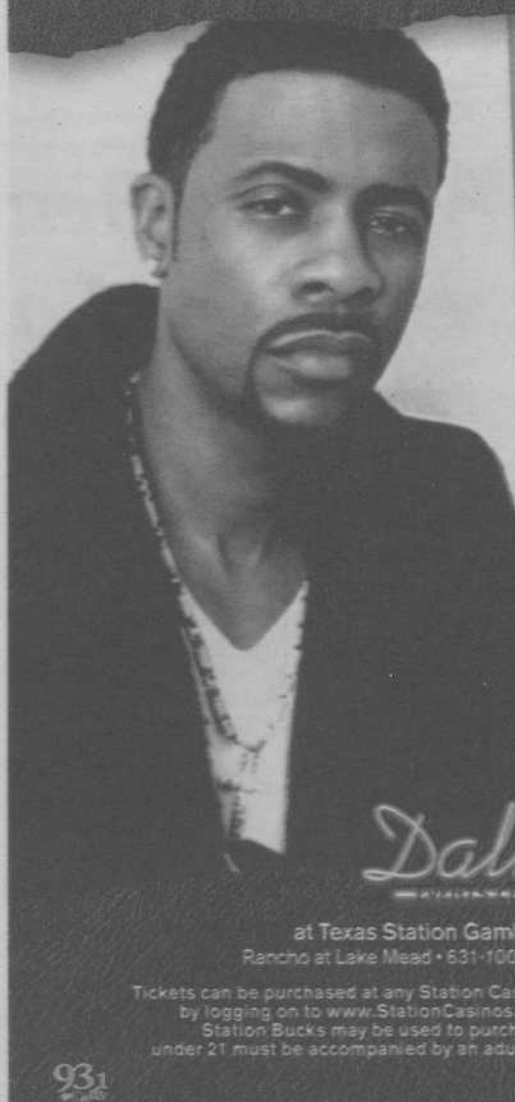
KW: Now, this is your screen debut. How much pressure did you feel in the lead role?

RW: It was a lot of pressure. Your nerves can get the better of you, especially when it's your first film. But Ian [director Ian Iqbal Rashid], from the beginning, made me feel right at home, and reassured me that the part was mine, and that I didn't need to worry about whether

I was going to have the part (See Rutina, Page 7)

Texas Station

# Front Row!



## KEITH SWEAT

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2008  
8pm  
TICKETS FROM \$22<sup>50</sup> + TAX

"MAKE YOU SWEAT" • "KEEP IT COMIN"  
"I'LL GIVE ALL MY LOVE TO YOU"  
"SOMETHING JUST AIN'T RIGHT"  
"MAKE IT LAST FOREVER"  
"MERRY GO ROUND" • "I WANT HER"

*Dallas*

at Texas Station Gambling Hall & Hotel  
Rancho at Lake Mead • 631-1000 • www.texasstation.com

Tickets can be purchased at any Station Casinos Boarding Pass Rewards Centers, by logging on to www.StationCasinos.com or by calling (702) 547-5300. Station Bucks may be used to purchase tickets. All ages welcome, under 21 must be accompanied by an adult. Digital photography is prohibited.