

## SAMARIA

On Samaria's latest single, "Foolish," she makes a bold proclamation of self-awareness: "Get my s\*\*t together, just to f\*\*kin' lose it," she coos. "I'm foolish." At 22, the singer/songwriter has lived many lives within two short decades, documenting her journey through song along the way. As she readies her upcoming mixtape, *Adventures Of Lovergirl*, along with her debut album, Samaria is finally geared to share her story with the world.

"My family always said I was 13 going on 37," she says with a laugh. "I was a very emotional kid, but rough around the edges." Born in Oakland, Samaria divided her time between both her mother's and father's homes, often moving around with her mother who was an aspiring singer. "I love where I'm from," she says of the Bay Area. "I honestly believe the Bay cultivated a lot of who I am as a person: my tomboy style, my lingo, how I write my music." She attended school in the prestigious Berkeley thanks to using her grandmother's address as she lived out of zone, and was known as the smart student who was always in hot water. "I had this sass to me," she recalls. "I was always in the principal's office. I was always in trouble, but I was a kid who was a little too wise beyond her years." A fan of '90s R&B (thanks to long road trips with her mom), Samaria took in the classic New Jack Swing Era while listening to modern-day heroines like Keyshia Cole.

From writing fairytales to filling journals with stories and poetry, Samaria penned one of her first songs at 11 about a boy she had a crush on who always dyed his hair. "The song was called 'Fire Head,'" she says. "Mind you I never really ever had a conversation with him." Her maternal grandmother was her biggest cheerleader in music, often providing musical incentives like instruments and music lessons for good grades. However, at 14, Samaria lost her grandmother to Multiple System Atrophy. "I was heartbroken," Samaria says of the loss. "I went through a depression and kind of stopped showing up to school." By 16, she returned to a career in music, the goal her grandmother had always encouraged her to pursue. "I knew she believed in me. I wanted her to be proud of me." Samaria dropped her first song over SoundCloud while still in school and was met with praise from her peers. She kept the momentum going after high school.

2016 was a monumental year for Samaria. A then unsigned artist, she released her debut EP, *The Story Of Right Now*, a project that centered around a key relationship in her life. The project arrived with a short film and was followed by a collaboration with Kehlani on the intoxicating "Love Me Crazy." Critical acclaim flooded in, though the fate of Samaria's career was still hanging in the balance. Praise doesn't pay the bills. "I just wasn't sure what I was doing with my life," the siren admits. "I love music and wanted to do music, but just wasn't sure if it was meant for me." In addition, Samaria found herself creatively separating from her original team, looking for new faces to work with as both she and her sound matured. She spent the following year in uncertainty, though it ultimately proved to be a blessing.

"In 2017 my life got really weird," she states. "I wasn't in the studio, and I was really sad about it. I felt like I had so much more to say." Samaria took a leap of faith and packed up her life and moved into her car with her manager in tow. Thanks to a gym membership, Samaria would shower in the locker room before hitting the road again with her manager. The two would travel back and forth to Los Angeles, attempting to connect with producers and other industry people. Many roads were a dead end, though she found her footing once again by reconnecting with her first EP's producers, Lawwi and Mill, as well as D.T.B. "Foolish" was the culmination of that serendipitous return to self. "I was really excited to get back into the studio again. I had a lot of stuff to get off my chest," Samaria adds. "'Foolish' was the result of that." After opening for SoundCloud upstart KR at her first LA performance, Samaria was discovered by an A&R for Republic Records. She inked a deal by the close of 2017, and the rest as they say, is history. "The end result was so worth it," she says, "and if I had to do it all again I would."

Her next project, *Adventures Of Lovergirl* will not only serve as a precursor to her debut album, but also shed light onto some of the more personal parts of Samaria that have been lurking in the shadows. "Lovergirl is my alter-ego," she explains. "Samaria puts up more guards and is afraid for people to get close because she's not sure if they are going to accept her for who she is. Lovergirl is the more vulnerable side of me that's not afraid to let more people in. It's my own way of breaking out of my own shell." Songs like "Shy Girl" will bring another side to the singer, as she introspectively muses over her own personality traits mixed with her perception of the world around her. "I don't trust none so I just do me," she sings, before an admission of her own flaws: "Shy girl always missing my chance."

From friendships to self-reflection, love, and love lost, Samaria's next work will not only showcase her elevated songwriting and melodic vocals, but also provide an intimate look at an artist who will soon set the bar for how to translate real life into song. "I've been through a lot of things in my life growing up, where I didn't feel like I deserved good things for myself," she admits. "I'm still in a place where I'm convincing myself that I deserve them."

In two years' time, Samaria came into our world and has proven her power for staying here. It was *The Story Of Right Now* that first captivated us, though her next moves will ultimately be her best ones. As Samaria prepares for the road to stardom ahead, she maintains one mission in mind. "I just want everyone who listens to my music to know that just because you're going through something right now doesn't mean you can't get out of it," she advises. "There's always room to grow and time to learn."