

PRISCILLA BLOCK

UNFILTERED AND UNSTOPPABLE

BY CINDY WATTS

Priscilla Block has always been the life of the party. Her fearless songwriting, bold style, and larger-than-life authenticity make her a diamond in a rhinestone industry.

Three years after her vulnerable and celebrated debut album, *Welcome to the Block Party*, Block released her sophomore album, *Things You Didn't See*. It's an invitation into the heart of the woman behind the sparkle. As she peels back her Insta-ready persona, listeners will learn that Block, like a diamond, is multi-faceted.

She's an up-and-coming queen of relatable storytelling. She's an effervescent communicator. And she knows that building connections with her audience is both sharing a beer and showing her tender spots.

"When I was stepping into this new record, it felt so perfect naming the project *Things You Didn't See* because I'm very open with my life," Block says. "But there is so much of my life that people haven't seen. You hear it in the record. Whether it's being in love or the years that I spent feeling really insecure, it's all these little pieces that made me who I am today."

Block wrote the title track, "Things You Didn't See," with Brandon Paddock and Martin Johnson. *You think that you know me / But how 'bout all the things you didn't see / The Craigslist roommates or the break-ins*, she sings.

The song begins with Block moving to Nashville while navigating her parents' divorce. Though sensitive to share in a room with two men, Block says the song "felt easy."

"I was just talking about growing up," she says. "I moved out to Nashville in my Chevy Malibu with only \$50 and some clothes shoved in a bag. When you listen through it, it brings you back to 17-year-old Priscilla moving to Nashville with not much."

Since then, Block has earned more than 700 million global streams, ACM and CMT nods, and her first No. 1 song with "You, Me and Whiskey," a duet with Justin Moore.

Block was born and raised in Raleigh, North Carolina, and is one of five siblings. She's the girl who moved to Nashville right after high school to try to make it in country music. Her only plan was to keep her head down, play every gig she could get, and hone her sound until someone took notice.

When the pandemic hit, she struggled to pay her

rent. Block refocused her energy on social media. With no shows to play, it was her only available outlet to build a fanbase. She made a TikTok account and started posting original music. Her songs "PMS" and "Thick Thighs" accumulated thousands of comments overnight. Even as traction grew, she had to leave her apartment in June 2020.

Block went to the bar, and in a season where everything felt wrong, she ran into an ex-boyfriend. A couple of weeks later, she wrote the heartbroken "Just About Over You" on FaceTime with a couple of female friends. She shared it on TikTok, and soon after, signed with Universal Music Group Nashville.

Now she's blissfully reunited with that ex-boyfriend who inspired "Just About Over You." There are even songs for him on the album—"He's My Man" and "Elijah." "He's My Man" is one of the few tracks in the collection that Block didn't write. That credit goes to Alysa Vanderheym, Faren Rachels, Chris Tompkins, and Jacob Hackworth. When she heard it, she thought, "Oh my gosh, this song is so me."

Block wanted to record "He's My Man" as soon as she heard it. Being in love and being in a relationship were things fans hadn't "seen" her do.

"Elijah" tells their story as a couple. "People have been wanting to know more about that side of me, and it's something that I've protected for a long time," she says.

Block was 21 when she and Elijah started dating. She fell in love "superfast."

"Life happened and we kind of fell apart and found our way back together," she says. "I think that's going to be really exciting for the fans to hear that, 'Wow, it was him all along.'"

"Couldn't Care Less" is another autobiographical track. Block wrote the song with Alex Maxwell, Cole Taylor, and Trannie Anderson about

the dichotomy between how people view her and the truth. *I posted a picture and it got a bunch of likes / That she should lose weight comment kept me up all night*, she sings.

The hook says that Block couldn't care less about the comment. But in fact, she couldn't care any more. She wrote the track recently and says it felt like the missing piece to the record—the part of her that fans misunderstood the most.

"It was really nice being able to pour my heart into these songs," Block says. "I was like, 'Okay, what part of the story do I want to share?' I think it's all tied into the record in different ways. It's my life. It's my story and something that I'm just really proud of." ★



Photo by Britton Webb