

Ap Classes at School, Comedy Clubs at Night

By Celest Randolph



Roman Witt is an ap student and a “Witt-y” comedian. He is the rare combo of a class clown and an advanced-placed student. Despite taking all these vigorous courses, his main goal is to become a stand-up performer.

Roman’s childhood made him who he is today. His dad left when he was only a month old and never got to know him. He treated his stepdads like his own but once he got close to them, another one would take the previous one’s place.

“As a kid, I thought all of them were my dad. Then they would leave out of nowhere. It’s like I was getting a divorce 4 times in a row.” (Witt)

He found comedy and writing to be coping mechanisms. No matter how dark times were for him, he would find the light through jokes and make others laugh.

Despite not having the best circumstances, Roman still had a great childhood. His aunt was like a second mother to him.

“He was very precious and smart and emotionally connected as a toddler. He was so adorable, pure, and free-spirited. He used to love the song “the boots with the fur” when he was like three. And if you changed the channel he would cry.” said Estrella Gabriel. His aunt lives in Los Angeles and works as an actress and a writer. Estrella played a big part in Roman being interested in the entertainment industry. She would let him watch comedy specials and stand-up routines, this is when he really got into it and wanted to try it himself.

His family were his biggest supporters, but they wanted him to focus on school. The push to become successful is what ultimately made Witt go from being an average student to challenging himself to college-level work. He did many advanced placed classes including

literature, United States and European history, and biology. His dream school was New York University to major in writing. His parents made sure he put his all into his studies. They would put screentime limits during school, no social media, and a bedtime. Roman had a hard time with the rules and all the studying but it had proven to pay off.

At his academic peak, he had a 4.5 grade point average for the term. Roman's future seemed to be set in stone but doing stand-up was always on the back of his mind. Anytime he had free time, he would watch comedy routines.

"I feel like most people don't actually care for comedy, yeah, they know the big names like Dave Chappelle and Kevin Hart but don't really know anyone who isn't an A-lister. I see comedy as an art and underappreciated" (Witt)

It is something he's been yearning for. The big bright lights, huge audience, and a room full of laughter. No amount of academic praise could fulfill what he really wanted. In March of this year, he stopped letting stand up just being a dream and put himself into the limelight. In his first routine, he performed in front of only 5 people. He did decent in the first half and bombed the second half. Students at school felt he was trying hard and should quit. Roman struggled with self-image and what people think about him. Anytime someone said anything bad about it, it would eat him up inside and that's all he would think about. It took a lot in him to not listen to people and to believe in himself.

Witt continued to do stand-up, getting better, and having a bigger audience each time. Each time his aunt saw more and more potential in him.

"Roman is a natural storyteller. And he's very "Witt-y." And I think you have to be a great storyteller to be a great comedian. I also think you must see the nuances in human nature to catch those funny moments. He has a natural gift in both. I have no doubt that he has what it takes. Watching him at the comedy clubs do his stand up felt like I was watching a star being born." (Gabriel)

As he was about to apply to universities Roman thought this wasn't for me, at least not yet. He has made the decision to instead move to Texas and to go to community college to focus on his stand-up career.

"I just want to be the best I can in comedy. It's something that I am always thinking about. I can't let it go. I believe anything is possible if you work for it no matter how good or bad you are. It's all about how much you want and what you are willing to do and sacrifice for it."

Roman's future was something he had been working hard for, for the last few years. Now he takes a giant leap of faith to follow his dreams. A step into an unknown, uncertain, and high-risk future that few are willing to take and even fewer are to succeed. All in the name of passion.