

WEEK 1



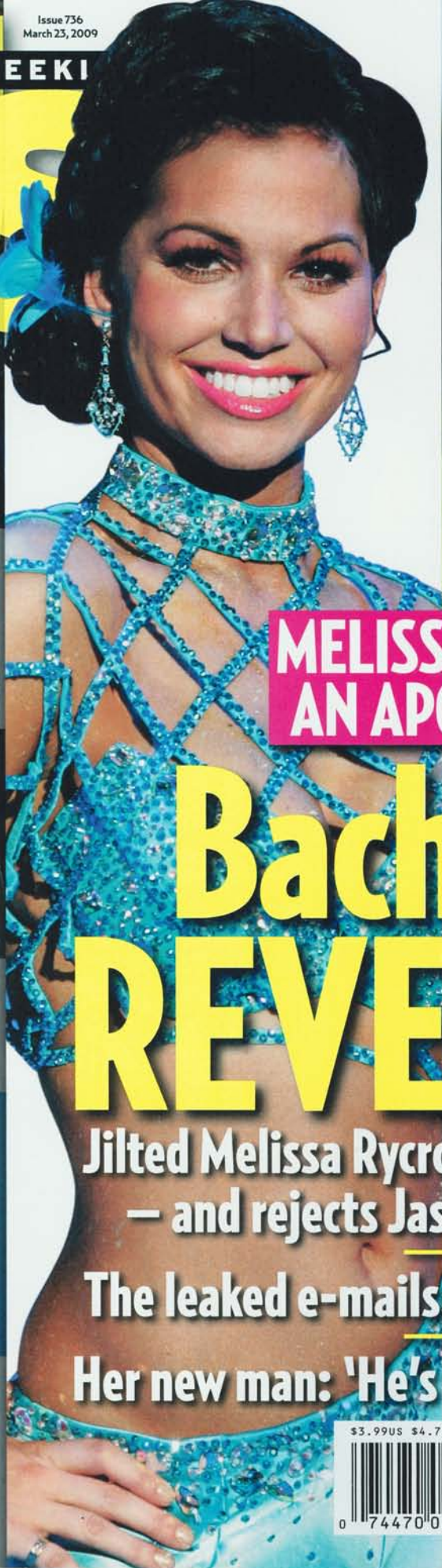
OCTO MOM
'She Got Real GREEDY'



JON & KATE
TROUBLE



RIHANNA
OPRAH'S WARNING



MELISSA GETS
AN APOLOGY

Bachelor REVENGE!

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As **Chris Brown** faces jail, loved ones fear **Rihanna** is isolating herself as her romantic reconciliation continues

BY JAIME BUERGER

HOLDING COURT among a small circle of friends and back-on-beau Chris Brown in Miami in the final days of February, Rihanna was doing what she does best: performing. "She was acting overly excited and very talkative," says a source. As the heavily made-up singer (her forehead concealed by bangs) raved about Dior bags and rapper Lil Wayne's new car, "it was like she was trying to

entertain everyone, so nobody would think, You got beat up three weeks ago, and you're back with this guy?"

But on March 5, the elephant in the room became impossible to ignore: Appearing at L.A. Superior Court in a gray three-piece suit, Brown, 19, was formally charged with two felony counts of assault and making criminal threats. (He faces up to four years and eight months in prison.) Just as dramatic: a newly released

THE L.A.P.D. AFFIDAVIT

Harrowing new details from that night



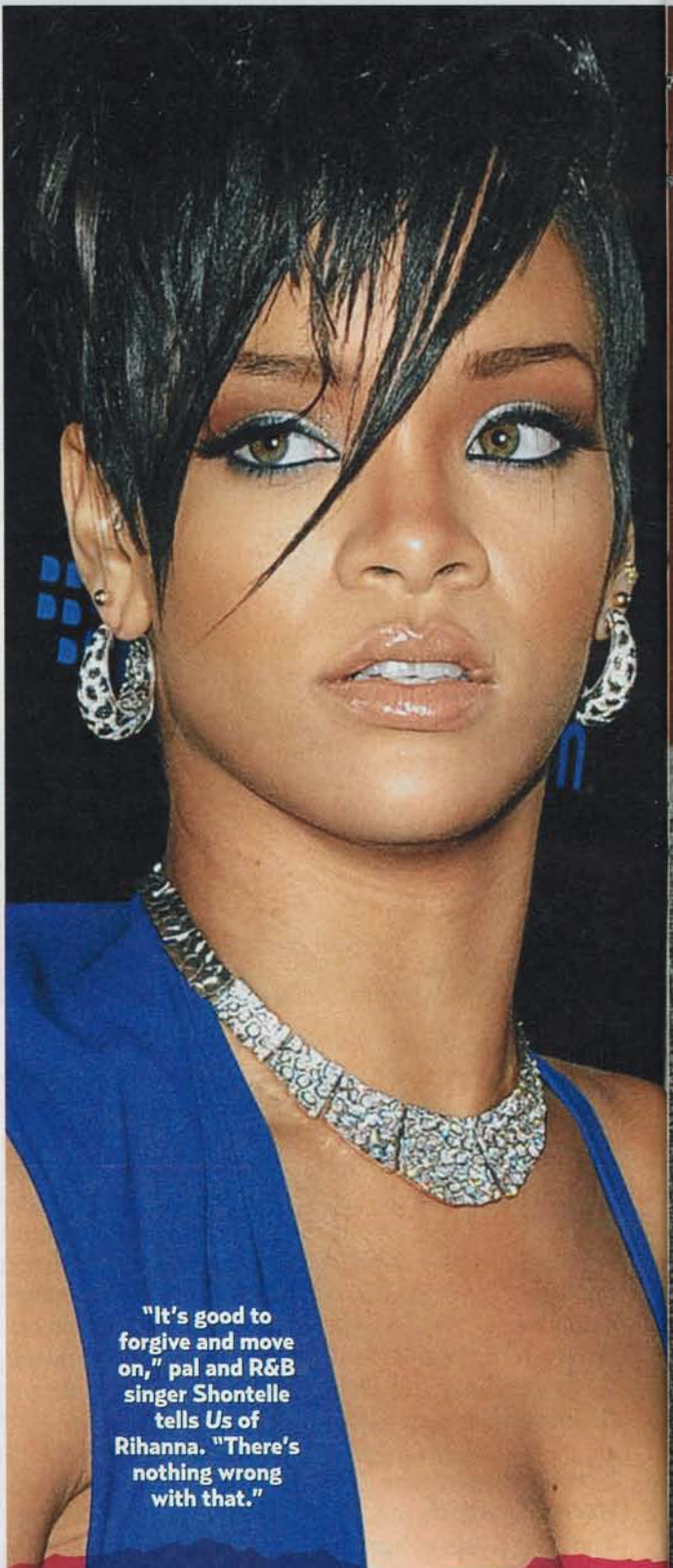
At Brown's March 5 court date, a full account of the alleged assault was revealed. He punched and bit Rihanna repeatedly as blood spattered; when she tried to call an assistant for help, he threatened to kill her, then choked her nearly unconscious. Later, Brown called the assistant as if nothing had happened, then hung up when told Rihanna had given police his name. He texted an apology to the assistant nine days later.

and he punched her in the left eye with his right hand. He then drove away in the vehicle and continued

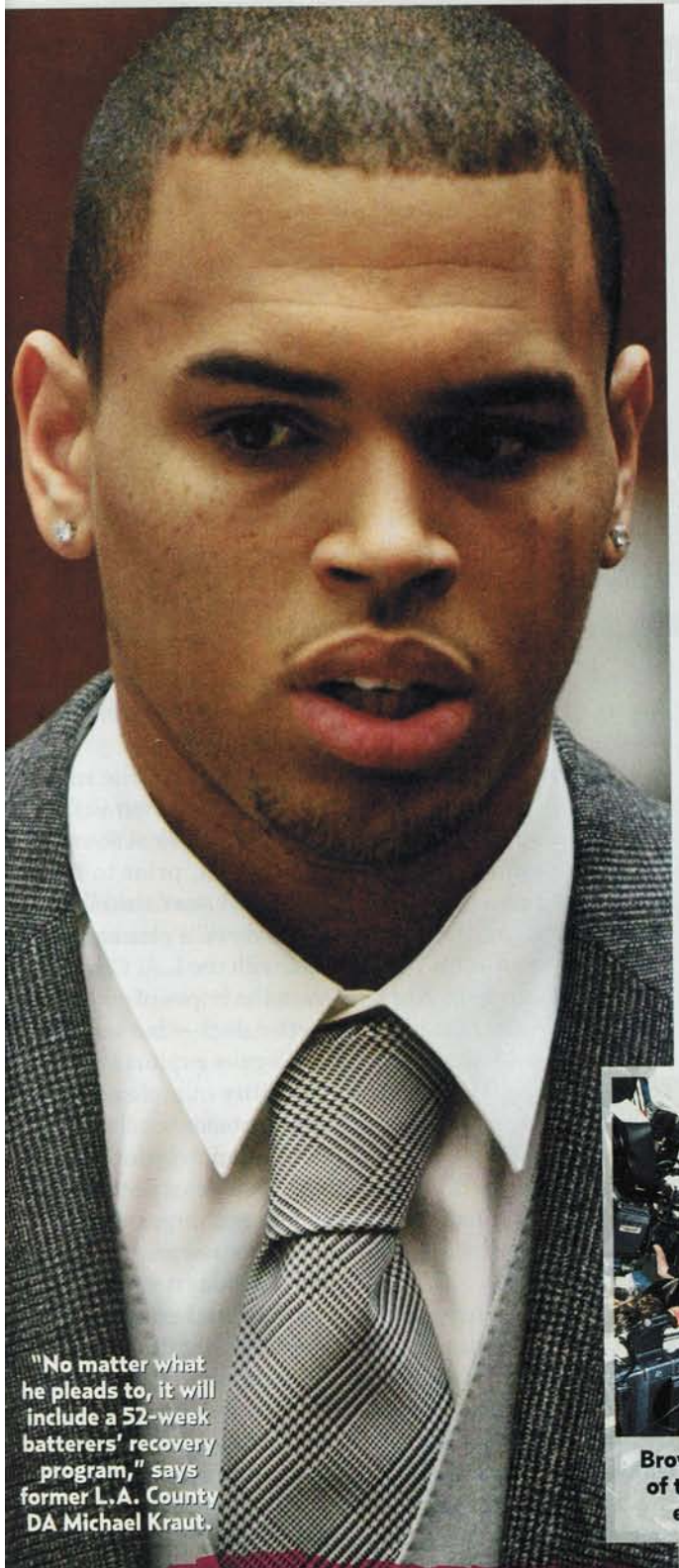
to punch her in the face with his right hand while steering the vehicle with his left hand. The assault caused Robyn F's mouth to fill with blood and blood to splatter all over her clothing and the interior of

punching her in the face and arms. He then placed her in a head lock positioning the front of her throat between his bicep and forearm. Brown began applying pressure to Robyn F's left and right carotid arteries causing her to be unable to breathe and she began to lose consciousness. She reached up with her left hand and began attempting to gouge his eyes in an attempt to free herself. Brown bit her left ring and

"It's good to forgive and move on," pal and R&B singer Shontelle tells *Us* of Rihanna. "There's nothing wrong with that."



The Mind of an



"No matter what he pleads to, it will include a 52-week batterers' recovery program," says former L.A. County DA Michael Kraut.

police affidavit with gruesome details of how Brown allegedly assaulted Rihanna, 21, in L.A. February 7. (Brown entered no plea; his lawyer was granted a postponement to April 6.)

Although her lawyer, Donald Etra, told *Us* magazine .com, "If she is required to testify, she will do so," the singer remains defiant in her decision to reunite with Brown. "She is ignoring what everyone says and cutting people off," says a source. "She's her own pilot right now, blinded by love." Her Barbados-based father, Ronald Fenty (who hasn't been able to reach her since her February 20 birthday), tells *Us*, "Somebody has a stranglehold on her. I'm lost."

Twisted Love

Us has learned fresh details of their reconciliation during the recent rendezvous in Miami. "They were really lovey-dovey, but then they'd also bicker," says an insider,

who tells *Us* the duo hunkered down at Diddy's Star Island retreat with Brown's mom, Rihanna's bodyguard and about 10 friends. "They got in little married-couple fights, nothing extreme, and everybody stood back, like they were used to it."

One night, Rihanna sipped margaritas (Bow Wow, a pal of the couple, tells *Us* rumors of a pregnancy and secret wedding are "not true") as the hot-headed Brown (whose mom fixed him plates of food) got riled. "They all had cabin fever because there were paparazzi helicopters," says the insider. "So they decided to play a parlor game. Chris was explaining the rules, and someone else jumped in to help, and Chris was like, 'No, I'm explaining this! Shut up!' He was very competitive."

Alone & Defiant

Sources say Rihanna, post-attack, has increasingly isolated herself, changing



Brown's mom arrived at the front of the courthouse, while her son entered from underground.

Brown's mom, Loyce Hawkins, was red-eyed.

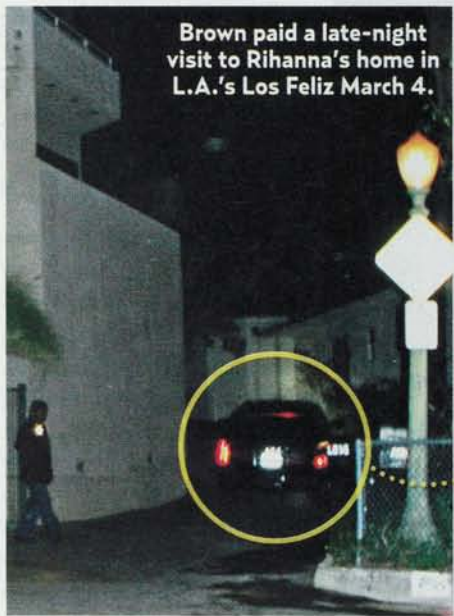
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Abused Woman

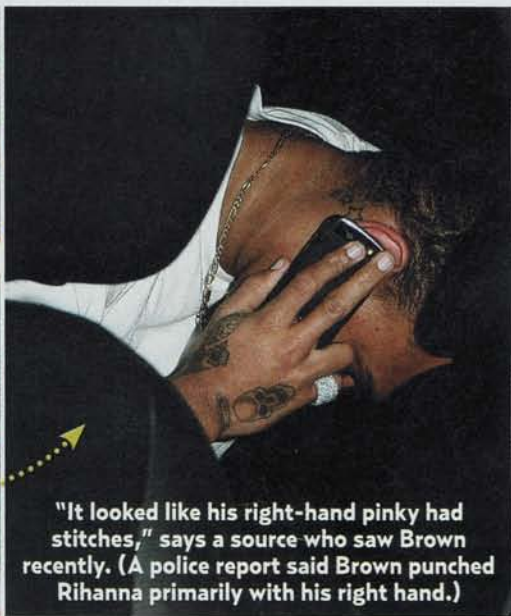
her e-mail and shutting out anyone who dares to question her decision to reunite with Brown. "We text only about silly stuff, like the *Watchmen* movie," a friend tells *Us*. "But whenever I bring up Chris, unless I'm saying she should be back with him, she'll change the subject or cut me off."

Even family is having difficulty reaching Rihanna. "She texted me, 'Daddy, I miss you,'" Fenty tells *Us* of a message he received on her 21st birthday. "I texted her back. No reply." Now, "I can't get a hold of her. Her mother can't. Her brother can't." A source adds she is keeping her management out of the loop too: "She's a creation of these executives, so, as crazy as it sounds, she feels this is something she can make her own decisions about."

But Esta Soler, president of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, warns such isolation is classic victim behavior: "It means you're listening to your abuser more than anyone else. And without help, they're going to find themselves in that situation again." Which is what her friends fear. Says a pal, "Am



Brown paid a late-night visit to Rihanna's home in L.A.'s Los Feliz March 4.



"It looked like his right-hand pinky had stitches," says a source who saw Brown recently. (A police report said Brown punched Rihanna primarily with his right hand.)

I scared for her? Hell, yeah. I saw the girl's face. She looked like chopped liver. He could kill her next time."

A family source reveals to *Us* Rihanna isn't the first woman in her extended family to experience domestic violence. "It happened, but I don't know how many times or if it had an impact [on Rihanna]," says the source, who adds Rihanna was aware of the abuse.

Is Chris Sorry?

Meanwhile, a week after jet-skiing off Diddy's Star

Island pad, Brown continues to carry on, says a source, "like his happy old self," playing basketball at actor Tyrese's L.A. pad March 8 and, on the day of his arraignment, hanging out at the SLS Hotel bar and asking fans via MySpace to vote for him in the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards. (Brown's high school guidance counselor, Raynell Vesselles, tells *Us*, "He may feel, 'I was wrong,' and we're not seeing it. But I do think the world is more open to forgiving when you own up to your mistakes.")

But at least on one occasion, Brown seemed aware of the public backlash against him: A late-night March 5 trip to an L.A. Astro Burger ended with the crooner fleeing to Bow Wow's nearby tour bus after patrons began gawking. "We were hanging out, as always, talking sports and basketball," Bow Wow tells *Us*, adding he didn't bring up Rihanna or the trial. "That's the purpose of a friend: to cheer him up.

He's keeping his head up. I'm praying for him. Not only for him, but for her, too."

The couple may be reconciled, but Brown is far from off the hook. A source tells *Us* that, prior to his March 5 court date, he turned down a plea agreement with the L.A. County DA in the hopes of getting a better deal — but is now once again exploring the possibility of a plea for a lesser sentence.

Unfortunately for him, there is little expectation the felony charges will be dropped or reduced. As the police affidavit revealed, Brown texted an apology to a Rihanna assistant nine days after the attack. "That amounts to a confession," Decio Rangel Jr., a former L.A. County deputy DA who specialized in domestic violence cases, tells *Us*. "It is extremely damning evidence." It all depends, he says, on Rihanna's testimony: "If she says she hit him first, that could very well be the difference whether he spends any time in jail or not." **US**

OPRAH'S WARNING



Winfrey: "Give it some time. Get yourself some counseling."

In a direct plea to Rihanna on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* March 6, the talk-show host urged: "Take care of yourself. Heal yourself first. . . . And love doesn't hurt. I've been saying this to women for years. If a man hits you once, he will hit you again."

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