

Gabrielle Union Says 'Being Blackballed in This Industry Is Very Real': 'You Will Never Work Again'

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By **Benjamin VanHoose** October 05, 2020 11:46 AM

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Gabrielle Union is opening up about the harsher side of the entertainment industry.

In a new cover story for *Marie Claire's* digital October issue, the *L.A.'s Finest* actress, 47, recalled what it was like to see her Black colleagues not support her after she came forward with misconduct claims against NBC and *America's Got Talent* last year.

Union, for instance, previously spoke out about her *AGT* costar **Terry Crews** not initially standing by her after she was fired from the show. Crews, 52, has apologized for "invalidating" her allegations.

"These racist institutions and systems have done an amazing job at keeping us very fearful of speaking up, asking for equality and asking for accountability, because they have shown us time and time again that we are disposable," Union told the magazine. "They will discredit and malign you, and you will never work again."

"Being blackballed in this industry is very real," she added.



PHOTO: DJENEBA ADUAYOM

Late last month, **Union and NBC** reached an amicable resolution over discrimination allegations, nearly one year after she was fired from *AGT* following one season on the show. The star told *Marie Claire* that not backing down to industry giants hopefully inspires others to speak up.

"The more you are transparent and the more you speak truth to power, it creates more space for other people to claim their reality, to claim their pain, to claim their healing and — if you want — to claim your justice," said Union.



PHOTO: DJENEBA ADUAYOM

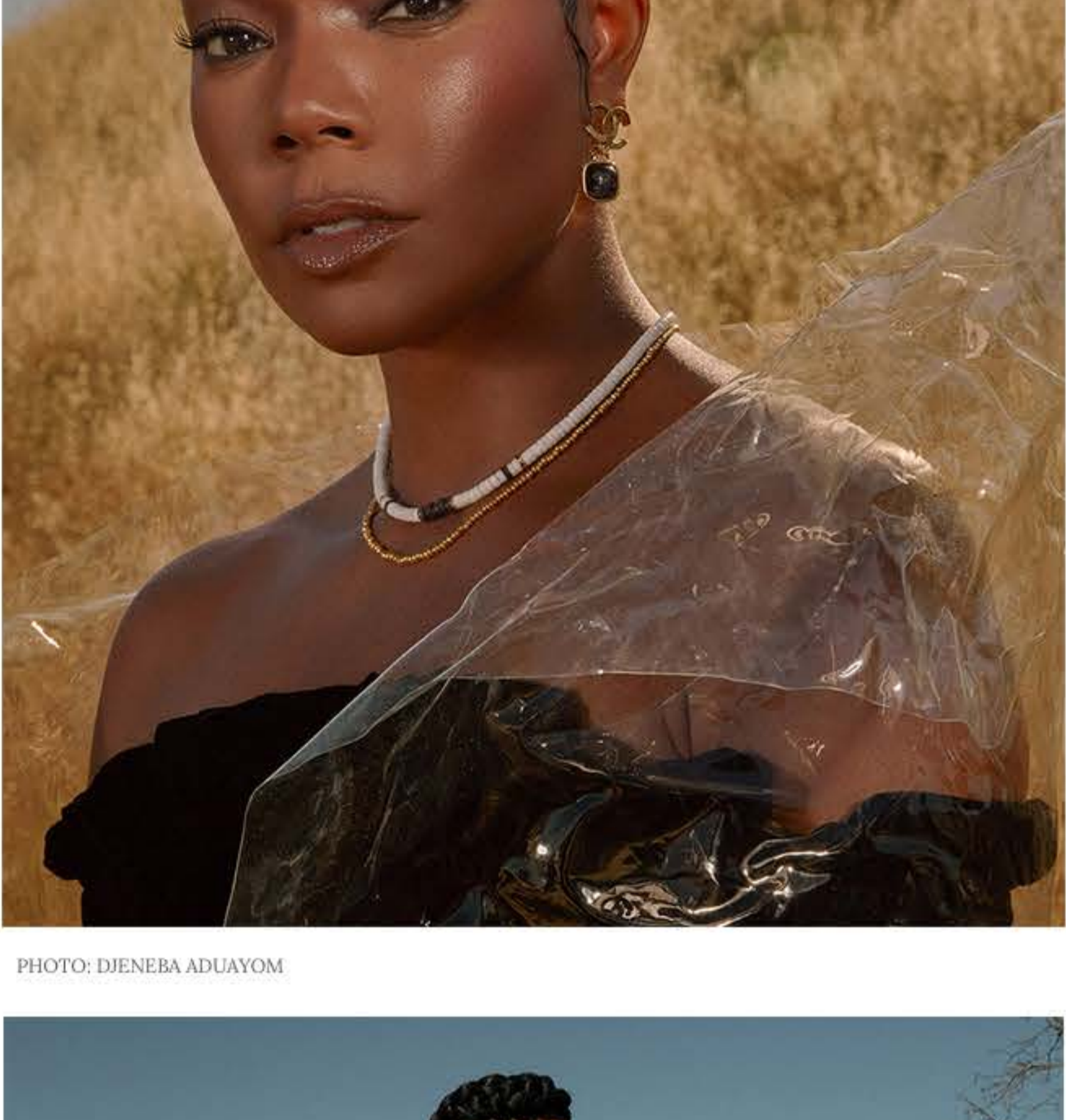


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Responding to those who minimized her experiences and accused her of overplaying her allegations against NBC, Union said she denies "that kind of gaslighting."

"That very sentiment is how all of this has been allowed to go on for centuries; that kind of gaslighting, I categorically reject," she said. "You are not going to gaslight me into minimizing my trauma, which is exactly what allows this to continue on for the next person."

She added in the interview: "I cannot center fear in my life. I can't center functioning from a fear of scarcity. They say silence is violence, and I refuse to be complicit in my silence. I have to be fully present in my body and fully free."

Husband **Dwyane Wade** explained how he supports Union no matter what, telling *Marie Claire*: "She loses a lot of sleep at times; she stresses out because she wants to do right by everyone. She knows that she's not going to fall. I'm going to catch her. I'm right there."

Last November, it was confirmed that new *AGT* judges **Union, 47, and Julianne Hough** would not be returning for the show's 15th season, which premiered earlier this year. Days later, a report by *Variety* claimed that Union had expressed concerns over alleged racial insensitivity on the set and that both women said they were subjected to "excessive notes" on their physical appearance.

Union and Hough's exits from the show launched an internal investigation of NBC and production companies Fremantle and Syco Entertainment. Union then took legal action against the two production companies, the media conglomerate, and *AGT* creator **Simon Cowell** through attorney Bryan Freedman.

In a joint statement last month, Union and NBC revealed they reached an amicable resolution, though details of the agreement were not disclosed. "We've reached an amicable resolution. NBC Entertainment appreciates the important concerns raised by Gabrielle Union and remains committed to ensuring an inclusive and supportive working environment where people of all backgrounds can be treated with respect," read the statement, obtained by PEOPLE.