

MATT BAI: HOW CAN JON CORZINE POSSIBLY BE RE-ELECTED THIS YEAR?

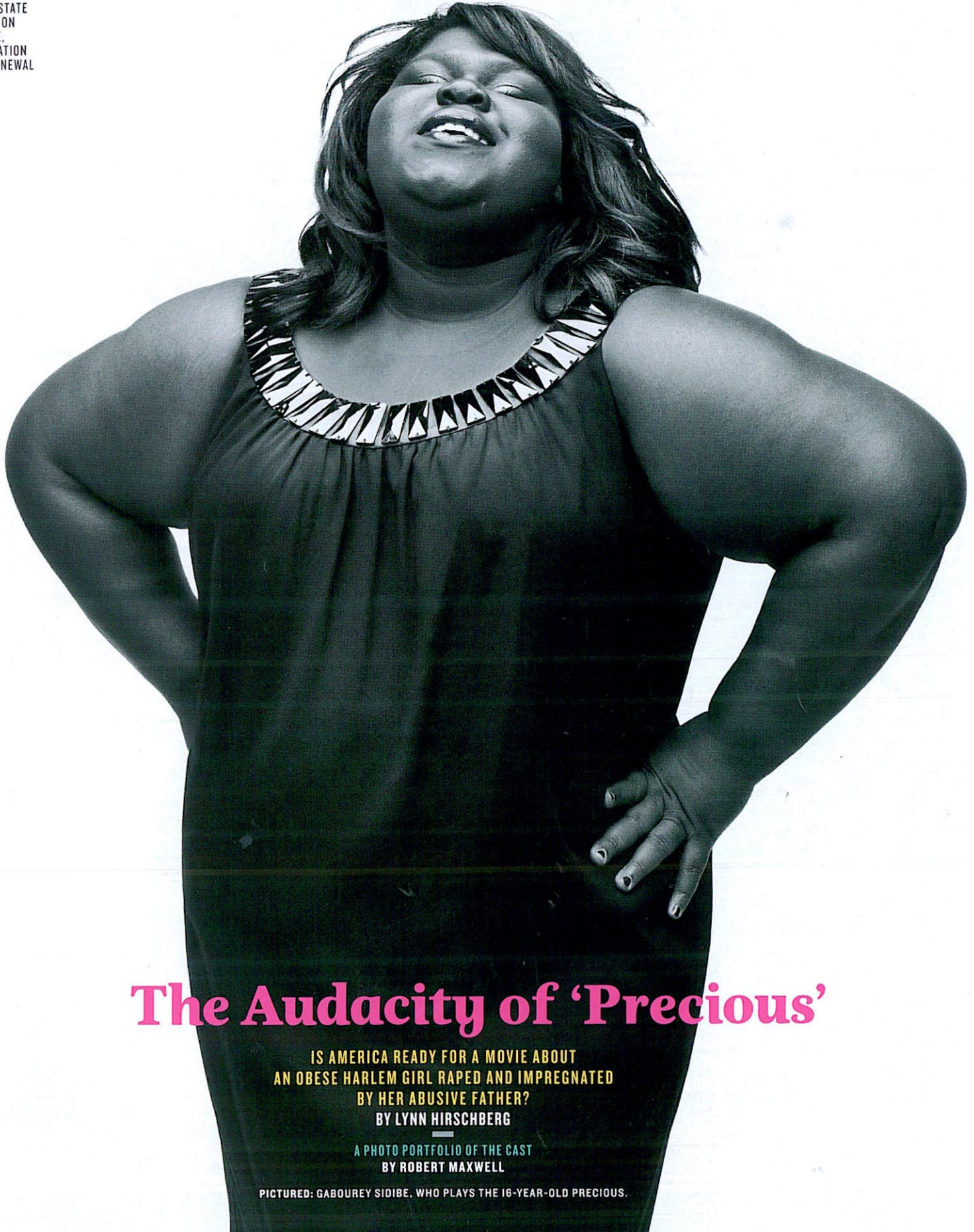
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INSIDE:

Key

REAL ESTATE
BONUS ON
RESALE,
RENOVATION
AND RENEWAL



The Audacity of 'Precious'

IS AMERICA READY FOR A MOVIE ABOUT
AN OBESE HARLEM GIRL RAPED AND IMPREGNATED
BY HER ABUSIVE FATHER?

BY LYNN HIRSCHBERG

A PHOTO PORTFOLIO OF THE CAST
BY ROBERT MAXWELL

PICTURED: GABOUREY SIDIBE, WHO PLAYS THE 16-YEAR-OLD PRECIOUS.

I THINK I SEE MOLD IN THE WALLS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

DARDICK: You should hire a team of professionals who specialize in mold. First, ask them to come and test how much mold is present in the house and where; then have them abate the mold if you have it. There are contractors who will tell you they can cut the mold out and patch it and no one will know the difference. Well, if they do a bad job, the mold can go airborne throughout your house. So you'd better hire people who will do it the proper way. **DISALVO:** Mold is usually a result of prolonged moisture or water infiltration. So be sure the source of the leak or dampness has been eliminated. You might also think about using a room dehumidifier to dry the area before closing the wall up again. **WIENER:** After you've cut the mold away, you have to use a primer that kills any remaining mold. This is a primer based on alcohol. They are really stinky, but they kill the mold spores.

What should I be doing this month to avoid potential problems caused by cold weather?

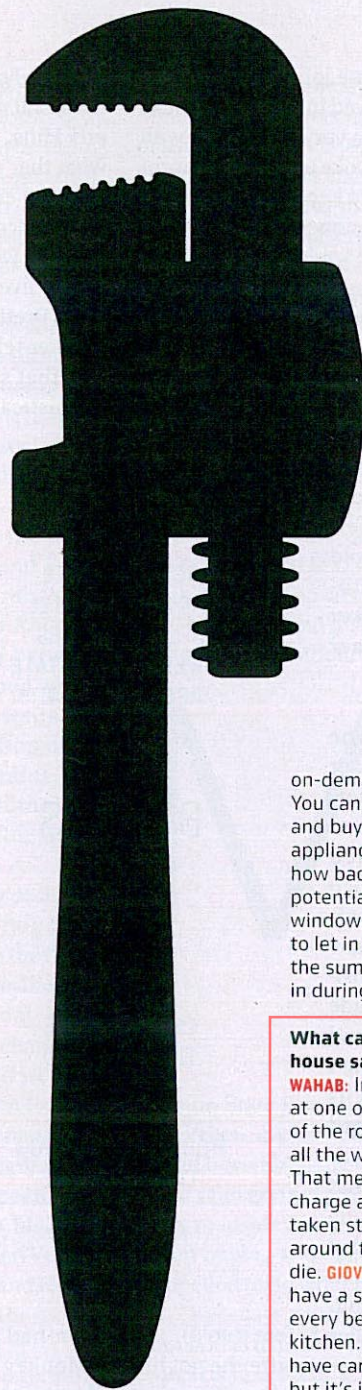
REETZ: The major cold-weather problem stems from clogged gutters and angles in a roof that will create ice dams. If water can't flow properly away from the house, it freezes, then starts to melt, and that water can seep into the house. So clean your gutters. **DISALVO:** Be sure all outside water is turned off, like hose lines and sprinklers. Then be sure any water lines in cold places are turned off, like unheated basement or crawl spaces. If they cannot be turned off, they should be insulated or heated with a heat trace wire, which is like an electric blanket for your pipes and relatively easy to install. **PASTER:** You should have a list of things you check each autumn. Make sure the

insulation in the attic and basement and around windows is in good shape. Have your chimney cleaned and do the same for wood stoves and boilers. If you don't clean these well, you are running the risk of a fire.

I had a house fire. How can I make improvements that will raise my house's value?

MARELLI: The fire is a great opportunity to get away from the wood framing that was the bones of many older houses. We'd go with a metal framing system. There are heavy-duty metal products for the floors and ceilings and lightweight products for the walls. They are straight; they don't warp. You can easily order them to size, and if you have hired an outfit that's used to working with them, they will fly through the building process like Tinkertoys.

LICHT: Childproof the house; it's a great selling point, and you can do it in an attractive way as opposed to adding plastic bits on at a later date. Build pocket gates that go into the walls at stairways. Install safeguarded electric outlets. Install kitchen cupboards that are lockable, appliances that fasten and doors and windows that lock where kids can't reach them. **WIENER:** This gives you the opportunity to create a modern, energy-efficient home. You can install solar and wind power and



on-demand water heaters. You can insulate your pipes and buy energy-efficient appliances. Depending on how bad the fire was, you can potentially put in better windows that are designed to let in a lot less heat during the summer and keep heat in during the winter.

What can I do to make my house safer?

WAHAB: Install a lightning rod at one of the higher elevations of the roof and ground it all the way through the house. That means any electrical charge absorbed by the rod is taken straight to the soil around the house, where it will die. **GIOVANNITTI:** You should have a smoke alarm outside every bedroom and one in the kitchen. A lot of houses don't have carbon monoxide alarms, but it's important, because if you have a boiler, it can malfunction and your house can fill with carbon monoxide, which has no odor, and you won't discover it before it's too late. You need at least one

carbon monoxide alarm upstairs and one downstairs. It's best to have all alarms hard-wired to the house power. **HOLBROOK:** You should put in a monitoring system that will keep track of all the mechanical and electronic devices in your house. The level of sophistication of monitoring systems has increased a great deal in the last few years. So if a washing machine fails and there's a flood, if a fuse blows, if the fridge goes above a certain temperature, you are alerted on your computer, at your office or on your cellphone.

What's the best fix for a hole in drywall?

SLOVAK: Cut a piece of drywall to fit the hole, but leave a border around this piece of just the top layer of the drywall. Essentially, you take your knife and remove the cement part of the drywall around the border, leaving the paper layer on top intact. Now you have a piece of drywall that fits in the hole and a border around it that you can attach to the surrounding wall with tape and compound, sand smooth and paint. **LICHT:** I would cut out the entire section of drywall around the hole from stud to stud, meaning from the metal or wooden supports that the drywall is attached to at either end. Then you can install a new section of drywall cleanly and solidly. **WAHAB:** If the hole is small, you can just patch it. You don't need the drywall. Use drywall compound, which is like a white paste that we use to join drywall boards together. Apply a nice dollop of the compound to the hole. When it dries, you sand it down to the level of the wall and you paint over it. **Edward Lewine**

THE PANEL

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