

“A casting director from ‘Euphoria’ saw me on Steve Harvey’s show and asked if I was interested in acting,” Javon said, as he recounted the life-changing phone call that he received shortly after being interviewed by Steve Harvey. “It’s not something that I ever did before, so it was a confusing space [at first.] But I ended up trying out and I got [the role of Ashtray] immediately.”

Up until that point, Javon had spent the majority of his life being trained by his father, DJ Walton, to become a boxer. But once he flashed his pizzazz on syndicated television, the producers at HBO were hell-bent on converting the young dual-sport athlete into a triple threat. In wake of Javon’s interview with Steve Harvey, the visionaries behind “Euphoria” believed that they had just discovered a hidden gem with the potential to add personality and glaring characteristics to the role of a gun-wielding drug dealer with face tattoos. Initially, the show’s creators wanted someone much older to play the role of Ashtray, but once Javon performed a cold read, at the tender age of twelve, they flipped the script and penciled him in as a member of the main cast. “At first, I had problems pronouncing

“It’s really good for them, in a certain kind of way. Because a lot of kids come from a tough background and when they watch ‘Euphoria,’ they can relate to whoever they’re trying to relate to and it gives them a little break.”



the drug names right,” said Javon with a slight chuckle. “[The casting directors] were going for an older kid and a bigger kid but they ended up liking my look for it, so I got chosen for Euphoria.”

In the years that followed, the adolescent actor would go on to become America’s most beloved on-screen drug dealer. Or better yet, the baby-faced muscle in a trap house orchestrated by his on-screen older brother, Fezco (a character played by Angus Cloud). Javon’s cold-blooded “death stare” in season one of ‘Euphoria’ helped pierce a hole through the show’s metaphysical third wall and gave its viewers an emotional glimpse into the life of two latchkey kids trying to make their way in a town full of vivacious teenagers who all have their own hazardous subplots to deal with. It’s an impression that made Javon a star, immediately following the conclusion of the inaugural season. And it’s an emotional roller coaster ride that he’ll always cherish, because he has had the pleasure of sharing the experience with a leading woman like Zendaya, along with a slew of fresh Hollywood faces such as Hunter Schafer, Sydney Sweeney, and Jacob Elordi. Indeed, the talented young cast has been given their flowers, in the form of awards, critical acclaim, and the distinction of boasting the second most-watched show in the history of HBO. Nevertheless, the roses have also come with a fair share of thorns because organizations like D.A.R.E

JAVON WALTON