

Episode Title: **Brittney Spencer's Country Dreams**

Episode Subtitle (Optional):

Episode Summary: In this week's episode, Sid Evans, Editor-in-Chief of *Southern Living Magazine*, talks to singer/songwriter Brittney Spencer about the Southern cuisine at her family's restaurant, her hit single "Sober & Skinny" and why she feels the best singers come from the church.

Episode Website Link: [www.southernliving.com/biscuits-and-jam-podcast](http://www.southernliving.com/biscuits-and-jam-podcast)

Episode Type: Full

Episode Rating: Clean

Season Number: 2

Episode Number: 15

--

**(NEW *Biscuits & Jam* Theme begins - Fiddler's Barn on Epidemic Sound)**

**Sid NARRATION:** Welcome to *Biscuits & Jam* from Southern Living. I'm Sid Evans, editor-in-chief of *Southern Living Magazine*. You might not figure that Baltimore, Maryland would be a hotbed for country music. But according to today's guest, there's more than meets the eye.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** There's just something about the simplicity of southern culture that I've always loved. I say all this all the time, but you can find a little country in every city the same way you can find a little city in every country.

**Sid NARRATION:** Brittney Spencer moved from her native Baltimore to Nashville in 2013, and began busking downtown about six months later. As she honed her craft, she also toured as a backing vocalist for Carrie Underwood and other artists. But the spotlight turned Brittney's way in 2020, as she released her first EP called "Compassion" to rave reviews, and country superstar Maren Morris—in a CMA award acceptance speech—credited Brittney and other Black women in country music for their contributions to the genre. Since then, Brittney has made her Grand Ole Opry debut, collaborated with Maren's supergroup The Highwomen, and been named to CMT's Next Women of Country.

On today's show, Brittney discusses the Southern cuisine at her family's Maryland restaurant, her hit single "Sober & Skinny," and how she's adding her own story to the annals of country music. All that and more this week on *Biscuits & Jam*.

**[Theme music ends]**

**SID EVANS:** Brittney Spencer, welcome to *Biscuits & Jam*!

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Thank you so much for having me. I am so excited. I've been looking forward to this all day.

**SID EVANS:** Well, me too. Listen, I usually start with a little background, but before we do anything else, I want to talk to you about your recent debut on the Grand Ole Opry.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah.

**SID EVANS:** What were some of the highlights of that experience?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Oh, my goodness, there's an energy there and I've heard other artists say it and you don't understand it really til you experience it. But when you walk in, there's just an energy there that's just like reminding you that it's so much bigger than just you. There's so much history there. There's so many people that have come before us, and really built this thing that we now know to be country music. It's really powerful. And I, personally, felt like I was just adding my little story to the much bigger grand scheme of country music. And, I feel where country music has been, where it is right now. And it makes me that much more excited to be part of the future of country music.

**SID EVANS:** Hmm. What a moment for you and what a moment really for this whole country and for country music. But tell me, what is it like to walk out on that stage for the first time to make your Opry debut?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** You know, something someone told me right before I went and made my debut. They said "the audience is rooting for you. They are so excited." Especially with, like, debuts. Someone comes there for the first time and, they just want to have a good time. They're just rooting for you. And I really felt that love when I went out on the stage. It was a pretty incredible night. It was actually the first night that the Opry was at full capacity since the pandemic started last year. So, it was a pretty big night for me for multiple reasons, including that communal sigh of relief that you feel, or at least that I felt, in the room when everyone was able to gather together that many people, for the first time. And, just stepping into that circle, man, I wish I could put it into words, it just feels surreal. And like I said, I just feel like I'm just putting my story into a much bigger one. And, I think that's just the beauty of country music. It was brilliant in every way.

**SID EVANS:** You know, I saw you post a picture on Instagram where you were looking at a photograph of Charley Pride.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah.

**SID EVANS:** Who we lost last year. What did he mean to you as an artist?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** To me, just looking at the career, and just the life of Charley Pride, it means a lot to me, because there have been times where I've just been discouraged. But I think that if you can think of some of your heroes and think, "you know what? they did it, maybe I can, too." We're watching this shift in country music where we're watching more people of color just get access and opportunity to be able to play. And, I think about Charlie Pride. He was the only one for so long. And so to watch this time happen where there's so many people of color kind of influxing the whole industry, I, honestly, never knew if we would see this day. And so to be able to be alive during this time and to be doing music during this time, it's a beautiful thing. And sometimes I wonder, I wonder what he would say because I

never got a chance to meet him. Admittedly, I did watch a video with Jimmie Allen, I think like maybe a day or so after Charlie had passed and, he was saying that he told Charlie about a lot of the different Black artists that were coming up. He mentioned some names. By just listening to Jimmie, it sounded like Charlie was just really excited. And that makes me just so warm inside because maybe this was his dream. Maybe he was hoping that he will be able to open the door for so many others to come behind him. And when I was looking at that photo of Charlie at the, uh, Grand Ole Opry, I just remember thinking, "Man, what would you say about all this happening right now? Would you love it?" I mean, because so many of us are just standing on his shoulders. I think of that about Linda Martell, Charley Pride. I think that about Darius Rucker. Like, I'm—I'm not saying like, you know, he's here, of course. And I want to give him his flowers while he's here. You know, maybe—I don't know... by some weird stroke of luck, he's like, (imitates Darius) "you know, Brittney, one day I heard this podcast you did. And I just liked it." And I would be like, "yeah, Darius, I love you, man." It'd be great. Linda, too.

**SID EVANS:** You'll get your chance.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** I hope so. I just want to give people their flowers. I'm really big on that. I just think it's so important to let people know that, they've meant something to your life and to your journey and to your artistry because you never know if somebody feels unappreciated or overlooked or like—the people that they've helped pave the way for—you know, what if they never say thank you to you? I don't know what that feels like, but I imagine it might not feel good. So, I just like to give people their flowers because, you know, why not?

*(Instrumental music break)*

**SID EVANS:** So, Brittney, you're from Baltimore, originally.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** I sure am.

**SID EVANS:** Which is a long way from Nashville.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** It is.

**SID EVANS:** Tell me a little bit about what that town means to you and what it was like growing up there.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah, I love Baltimore. It's home. It's such an eclectic town. You know? I hear so many people talk about their small town and I'm like, man, Baltimore is not a small town, but I will tell you this. It is a small world, okay? Because even just the state of Maryland is so small in comparison to, like, where I am now, in Tennessee—you know, if you drive for an hour, you're in another state. And you can drive in so many different directions and end up in a totally different state. And that doesn't happen very often here in Tennessee. So even if things feel like a small town, it feels like it's still connected to something bigger. And Baltimore feels like a small world. You know, I grew up in church just singing. But, people will go to different churches and people that I never went to school with, never went to church with, I know them somehow/somewhat. I don't know how it happens, but it just does. We probably never even lived in the same neighborhood, but we had common interests and it took us to similar places. It's a really big hub for country music fans. Like, people stop in Maryland and in D.C.—

**SID EVANS:** Is it really?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah, people stop in Maryland and in D.C. all the time for shows. I mean, they can pack out a stadium out there. While it's not a lot of country music artists that come out of there, it's definitely a really great place for fans. I love saying that and then I love reading on Instagram and someone says, "I heard you on this thing and you were talking about Baltimore. You are so right. People think there's not country music fans." And so I'm grateful for that town. That's my place. That's my home.

**SID EVANS:** So, I'm told that you grew up with a pretty strong connection to the restaurant business.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Ooh. I don't know if it's a pretty strong connection to the restaurant business, but I've definitely been a hostess. I was a waitress, a terrible one. And, my family, they owned a restaurant called Grannie's in Owings Mills, Maryland, which is Baltimore. It's like—

**SID EVANS:** I would call that a pretty strong connection.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Well, you know, when you're a teenager and you're trying to figure out where to work, the restaurant industry is just kind of there, you know?

**SID EVANS:** Well, tell me about Grannie's.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah. So it's a lot of like Southern cuisine. Because a lot of my family's from southern Maryland. It's just fancy Southern food, that's all. It's like grits. But they've thickened it up some. And so it's like—it's bougie grits. And I love it. It's like bacon but the thick-cut one, you know? It's right up my alley. I love it.

**SID EVANS:** What were some of your other favorite things on the menu?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** A lot of their fish recipes are really good. I mean, because if you don't know Maryland, Maryland is really big on seafood. In Maryland, everything is just really fresh. And so it's a huge difference in the taste with, like, seafood just anything involving seafood there at Grannie's, I would just eat it all up. I love that place. And when you walk in there's like a wall of people's grandmothers and a lot of it is from people who've eaten at the restaurant. A lot of it is from people in my family, like my great-grandmother that I never got a chance to meet because she passed before I was born. Her picture is up on the wall and it's the only picture that we have of her. And so, you know, when I would go there—I haven't been there in a while because I've been in Tennessee—but when I would go, I would just look at the wall and just look at her picture like we would talk about with Charley; I'd be like, "wait, I wonder what she would think right now," And so it's definitely a hub for a lot of my family members to go to.

**SID EVANS:** So I wanted to ask you about the southern Maryland thing and whether you grew up feeling a connection to the South, because, you know, Maryland is kind of split in a way, you know?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Mm-hmm.

**SID EVANS:** There's that northern Maryland is really about the northeast. But—

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah.

**SID EVANS:** You know, we write about Maryland all the time at *Southern Living*.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Mm-hmm.

**SID EVANS:** And I know there are a lot of people in the state that kind of identify with Southern culture.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** I say all this all the time, but you can find a little country in every city the same way you can find a little city in every country. And so there are places where you can literally just drive to, like 10, 15 minutes from my parents' house and it looks like Tennessee or it looks like Virginia. And just this connection to Southern culture, I don't know exactly how I got so drawn to it, but I went on this rabbit hole after I discovered The Chicks at, like, 14, 15-years-old. I just started listening to country radio and I started watching a lot of the country music videos that were on TV, and it didn't feel like I was creating this, this whole new thing, because my family has for little small reasons, have called me country for a while. Like, how I just like to walk barefoot around the house. It's so funny, my stepmom, she wasn't very subtle in telling me to put socks or slippers on. She used to get me like slippers for like Christmas. She'd be like, "You're always so barefoot." I'm like, "I love being barefoot!" And so it's, it's just little things like that. Or just like how I like to wear boots all year round. People thought I was crazy in Baltimore and I was doing that before I even, you know, found out about the Chicks and went on this rabbit trail. There's just something about the simplicity of southern culture that I've always loved. But I appreciate the culture which I was brought up in, as well. So I really don't have much of an in-between for me. I either want to live in the city, like near the buildings and all the things, or I want to be in the woods. And I think that's really just kind of a testament to appreciating southern culture that I always kind of felt drawn to and also just the city life that I grew up in.

**SID EVANS:** So I've been told that your mom or your family kind of knew that you were going to be a country star one day. Is that true?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** My mom, she believed in me long before I did. She would do things like get me a class ring in high school with like a cowboy hat on one side or cowboy boots on another side. She got my first pair of cowboy boots. I never really had, like, high self-esteem, especially as a kid. For the times that I couldn't, you know, in my own self. She just believed and she just—my mom is a dreamer. And so she just felt like I would do really cool things that I'm doing right now. She saw it long before I did. And that's always meant a lot. My dad, he didn't think that I would actually do country music. He thought it was a phase because I grew up in church. No one in my family listened to country music until I started getting them on to it. I remember one time getting into my, uh, my youngest sister's car and she was listening to Taylor Swift. I was like, you listen to country music? She was like, I love this album. And I'm like, all right. I didn't know. No one else in our family listened to it, but I didn't know that the more I was doing it, my family started really gravitating towards country. And, like I said, my mom was really the first one to believe that I could actually do this thing. I wasn't the first one. She was.

**SID EVANS:** So, Brittney, you've talked a lot about growing up in the church. What was your relationship to the church like and what was your kind of regular routine of going to church?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah. Um, it's loud. In the best way, it's just loud. And it's just music everywhere. And I jokingly say to people that growing up in church. So much of it was like being rehearsed and being prepared. But so much of it is just improv. So you learn how to sing and you learn how to do it well and you learn how to read a room and you learn—I mean, I, I honestly don't know that I ever sing the same song the same way every time I sing it. It's always different. Even just the slightest change vocally, it's just something different every time. But that just comes from literally singing in church several times a week.

I attribute so much to church because I think the best singers come from church. And just the idea of being able to just sing your tail off is so important to me. And I, I really do attribute that to church. But also it teaches you to be grounded and it teaches you to be humble and it teaches you to be purposeful and intentional. I don't ever want to live my life with just me. I think even me, doing music, I'm in service to art. I'm in service to someone, to something, because I never wanted to live a life just for myself. And I think that being in such a communal thing teaches you to rely more on your purpose and leave from who you are and not just your ability and what you can do.

**SID EVANS:** So how did you go from listening to gospel music in the church to discovering country music?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** My parents, they split when I was about five years old. And so my mom is listening to gospel. My dad is listening to R&B. At church, I'm singing gospel. At school, I'm singing opera. I'm also doing jazz competitions. And I'm also singing with groups around town. And we're just kind of singing a little bit of everything. And then I'm just randomly just with a friend named Keisha one day and she says, you need to listen to this album and it's The Chicks. And she puts it in her car at church. We had literally just come out of church and she's like, you need to listen to The Chicks. And this is like the last place I would think I would like to discover country music. But I did, in Baltimore City. So, then I'm now adding country music to my repertoire of things that are just hitting my ears all the time. And I'm just—I'm hearing all these different things at once and that was teenage Brittney just hearing everything. And so, I would make a little, like, mixtapes on my iPod and I would be having, like—I don't know, I have Ray Charles and then Ella Fitzgerald and then Maria Callas, who's an opera singer.

**SID EVANS:** Sure.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** And then I have The Chicks. And I'd have Sarah Evans and Brad Paisley, and then I'd have Karen Clark Sheard and The Clark Sisters, who are gospel groups. And Yolanda Adams and Mary Mary and just all these different things. And that was my upbringing because I just had so many people around me, so many different kinds of people around me. So it was impossible to stay pigeonholed or pigeonheld—uh, whichever was the correct phrase—to, to one specific thing, because I was in such a town where everyone was so eclectic and everyone had their own flavor and it just—I don't know, it made this really dope melting pot.

*(Instrumental music break of NEW Biscuits & Jam theme "Fiddler's Barn" from Epidemic Sound)*

**SID NARRATION:** We'll continue with Brittney Spencer, after the break.

BREAK

*(Instrumental music break of NEW Biscuits & Jam theme "Fiddler's Barn" from Epidemic Sound)*

**SID NARRATION:** Welcome back to *Biscuits & Jam* from *Southern Living*. I'm Sid Evans, and we're talking with singer/songwriter Brittney Spencer.

**SID EVANS:** So then you make this journey to Nashville?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** I do. I made this trip eight years ago.

**SID EVANS:** And so this is a pilgrimage that, you know, so many artists have taken trying to make it big in Nashville. What were some of the highs and lows of your journey?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Man, there are so many highs, there's some lows, just like with anybody's journey, but my highs. I moved here eight years ago and I didn't play guitar yet. Though I had a guitar, I've taken some lessons in school but, honestly, I never want to cut my nails, so I didn't learn much. I know it sounds so silly, but I had like long nails and I was not ready to give them up. And I—but when I came to Nashville, I was like, you know what? I just—I can't bring these old habits. I really need to learn how to do this. So the first year here, I didn't sing anywhere. I taught myself how to play guitar. I started attending some songwriting workshops like at The Bluebird so that I could really hone my songwriting craft, which I had started in Baltimore as a teenager, as well. And then one day a friend tells me, “you should go downtown and you should start busking.” Because I was scared, like I didn't want to play anywhere. I was probably here in Nashville for like six months. And I was like, no, I don't want to sing anywhere for the first year. Like, I just want to chill out and just really get acclimated to the city and I'm scared. Like, I think at one point, I had taught myself how to play guitar but I was always sitting down. So the idea of standing up and playing guitar was so terrifying to me. It sounds so silly to say out loud, but it's true. I was so scared that, like, I wouldn't be able to see things and I wouldn't be able to fill it out quite as well. And she's like, “well, just go busk downtown. There's no pressure. There's not a show. You don't have to, like, plug in your guitar. You can do whatever you want. There's no time that you have to be there. There's no time you have to leave. Just do it.” And I was like, you know what? Fine. And I did it. And I had so much fun. And I ended up busking downtown for like nearly a year. And so, I guess, in short, after a long story, my highs would be that I learned how to lean into the things that would naturally just terrify me or make me really nervous. And now that's my most comfortable place. I love busking downtown. I love sitting on my living room couch and in my bed just writing songs. You know, I like going back to the start of it all because I was afraid to play out. So the only thing I did was play on my couch or on my bed. And now that's how I write songs. That's how I started writing my new song “Sober & Skinny.” I was sitting on my bed with my guitar. I don't know, I just kind of aim to always feel that way, especially that really, really personal connection that you get to make with people. People would just walk and I would just want to see what song would make them stop, what song would make people want to listen to me play for a little bit. I learned that a lot of times people who would stick around to hear me sing Pistol Annes and Johnny Cash. They also stuck around to hear me play Adele and Beyonce and Michael Jackson. And I thought, oh, everyone just likes good music. Cool. How about I just make songs and just have something for everybody? Have a little something for everybody?

**SID EVANS:** So Brittney, was there someone who really gave you a hand up at a critical moment in your career?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Man, there have been so many people who've uplifted me. I was in the middle of releasing my first EP this past summer and I was releasing each song just like one song at a time. And I've always done covers online of other songs. And this one particular time—it was a week before I released my single, “Sorrays Don't Work No More”—it was, um, a week leading up to that and I posted a cover of “Crowded Table” by The Highwomen and they retweeted it and they invited me to come and sing with them. And then I ended up building these wonderful friendships with the women in the group and they've lifted me up so much. And I've met so many artists. Ashley Monroe has been so encouraging. It's just so many people along this road who have been so encouraging. I'm super grateful for them, truly.

**SID EVANS:** So, Brittny, you have a new single out that's called, "Sober & Skinny," which you mentioned, and it's about kind of a relationship between two people who are trying to overcome some challenges. What was the story behind that song?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** The story is I was sitting on my bed and that was kind of doing my weekly routine of just kind of getting some song starter ideas. Collaboration and writing with other people is really big here in Nashville. So I knew I had some writing sessions coming up with a few folks. And this was during the pandemic. We was all on Zoom. And, I sat and I wrote the chorus for "Sober & Skinny" and I wrote everything except one line. That part still hadn't been worked out. And I thought you know what, this is kind of a quirky song. I don't know that anyone wants to write this with me, but, I'm just going to toss it out there anyway. And so later that week, I had a writing session with Nellie Joy and Jason Reeves, and I think that was the first one that I presented them with. And this was our first time meeting. And I played it for them and I was like, "I have some other ideas, too. You know, if you want to, you know, go a different direction." They're like, "nope, this is the one." I'm like, "you sure? This is a really quirky song. I still don't even know what it's about." And they're like, "no, let's do it!" And so we wrote it. I think we wrote it in like under two hours. I remember just feeling so proud about that song and when it was time to decide if I was going to record something, I remember just immediately being like, yep, that's the one. I want to do "Sober & Skinny". I want to record that right away. And I'm so proud of what we were able to do with that song. I'm proud of the video that we made for this song. It was the first video I'd ever made. This whole process has been wonderful. We did this thing together. And I'm so proud of it. Even if nobody listens to this song or likes it, I'm just like, man, I've had so much fun with this song. I have no regrets.

**SID EVANS:** Well, I'd love to listen to it. Would you mind singing a little bit of it?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** In a perfect world, you'll get sober, I get skinny. We live off of more than pennies, writing checks that we can cash, keeping all our promises. We got faith, we got each other. We grow up and we get better. Things need fixing. We got plenty. When you get sober, I'll get skinny.

**SID EVANS:** It's such a great song and it seems just so real and true and honest.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Thank you. I just wanted to kind of talk about a relationship where two folks are having a real conversation, where the other wants, you know, the other to change something about themselves. Those are two ideas on such wide spectrums. When you talk about being sober, is it that you need one less drink, when you do drink, or that you need rehab? When you're talking about weight, is it that your doctor is saying, "hey, you know, this is impacting your health?" Or do you just want to feel different? I don't consider this song a message song. Like, there's not something that I want people to gain from it, which I'm actually really happy about that. And I'm really happy that the song really doesn't resolve, and most of the song is literally about this imaginary world, the first two courses are saying "in a perfect world," it's not even reality. I just wanted to tell the story of two folks who have to, in a very real way, address the changes they want the other person to make and how projecting just isn't helpful. Focusing on someone else's issues without ever considering that maybe you have some, it's just not helpful. I don't know. I'm one of those songwriters where I'm still, honestly, after the song is written, I'm still trying to figure out what it's about sometimes. And that's my thing. I just like to tell stories. There's not always a moral. There's not always a deeply rooted meaning. There's—sometimes you just write stuff and you don't even know why yet.

**SID EVANS:** Well, I want to ask you about another song called "Compassion" which has been streamed millions of times on Spotify and elsewhere, and, I guess, you could say, it's a song about maybe putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah.

**SID EVANS:** And, it starts out with this line, "if a half-empty stomach makes you hangry, imagine life for people on the street." Can you tell me about what you were responding to when you wrote that song and the kind of feedback that you've gotten on it?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Yeah, I started writing it while I was on the plane coming back from the U.K.. I was singing background vocals on the tour for this band, and I for whatever reason, I just couldn't go to sleep. And so I just started writing this song. It's something about getting outside of your world, like your neighborhood, your city, your town, your state, and in this case, I guess, your country that makes you consider your worldview, and how you see it and how you think the world sees you. And I just remember thinking there's so many shoes that I've never worn. There are shoes that I wear that other folks will never be able to put on. Some people wouldn't even survive some of the shoes that I've had to wear and I wouldn't survive some of the shoes other people have had to wear, some of their experiences. I just thought about that quite a bit. And I just thought, man, what if we were all just a little more compassionate and just recognized that everybody's going through something. And I just wanted to find a way in this song to take really everyday routine things and kind of put them in a broader context. You know, how many times have we been hungry? Being like, oh, my gosh, I'm so hungry right now. I can't even focus. I can't even think. You know what? I can't work right now. I'm going to stop and take a lunch break. If we have a hard time focusing because we're hungry, because we missed breakfast, imagine someone who hasn't had food for several days and we want them to be in the best mood and to be the most caring. We just have these expectations. It's like, dude, they have eaten in days? Like, you're grouchy where you've missed a meal, and the whole first verse does that, if a half-empty stomach makes you hangry, imagine life for people in the street. If a neighbor's untamed yard can drive you crazy, imagine seeing bombs break through their concrete. That's, for me, that's talking about war. For me, it was just kind of getting out of my comfort zone and getting out of my home to consider that there's a different way of life for so many other people and their home, and their experiences, and then their circumstances. I'm usually shocked every time this song does something else. I'm shocked because I honestly thought this would be the song that will make Nashville hate me. I did. I really did. As a matter of fact, I submitted this song for a songwriting competition here in Nashville several years ago. And I think I got a five or six out of 10, like they didn't like it. And I'm like, okay, cool. I'm definitely putting this song out.

***Brittney's song "Compassion" plays: "If a half-empty stomach makes you hangry / Imagine life for people on the street / If a neighbor's untamed yard can drive you crazy / Imagine seeing bombs break through their concrete / Image is something of importance / But only when you've got anything to prove."***

**SID EVANS:** Well, Brittney, what are you most looking forward to for the rest of 2021?

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** I am looking forward to seeing people at shows. I am so, so looking forward to more music. I'm looking forward to seeing what the world looks like now that it's opening back up after a year and a half of the world being shut down, I'm looking forward to seeing what we all look like. You know, how do—how do we navigate this thing, you know, called life after having a year and a half apart?

**SID EVANS:** Well, and maybe a few more Grand Ole Opry performances.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Oh, yeah. I would love that. It's such a great place to perform, honestly. In rehearsal, I didn't step into the circle because you rehearse on the stage and I asked them to move the mic out of the circle because I didn't want to step into it until I finally got in front of people. And, uh, I don't know, maybe that was a metaphor. I'm ready to get in front of people. Let's put the mic in the circle. Come on. Let's put the mic on the stage. Let's go to all the places where they will have us. And let's do this thing because music is wonderful and it's been so missed.

**SID EVANS:** Well, we look forward to hearing a lot more from you and Brittney Spencer, it has been a great pleasure to have you on *Biscuits & Jam*.

**BRITTNEY SPENCER:** Thank you so, so much for having me. It's been such a pleasure.

*(NEW Biscuits theme music "Fiddler's Barn" from Epidemic Sound fades in)*

**Sid NARRATION:** Thanks for listening to my conversation with Brittney Spencer. You can listen to her EP titled "Compassion," as well as her latest single "Sober & Skinny" wherever you get digital music. Join me next week when we talk with Hillary Scott from Lady A about their new album and much more.

**HILLARY SCOTT:** I don't think you can feel full joy and appreciation for something, unless you've felt the opposite. And also, at the same time, like, how someone else chooses to see you or define you does not change how worthy and valuable you are to the world and that you belong just for being here, you know? And that you deserve to be loved for just existing, and I think that was a huge lesson.

*Southern Living* is based in Birmingham, AL, and this podcast was produced and edited in Nashville, TN. If you like what you hear, please consider leaving us a review on Apple Podcasts or telling your friends about the program. You can find us online at [southernliving.com](http://southernliving.com), and subscribe to our print publication by searching for *Southern Living* at [www.magazine.store](http://www.magazine.store).

*Biscuits & Jam* is produced by Heather Morgan Shott, Krissy Tiglias and me, Sid Evans, for *Southern Living*. Thanks also to Ann Kane, Jim Hanke, Danielle Roth, Matt Sav, Erica Wong, and Rachael King at Pod People.

We'll see you back here next week for more *Biscuits & Jam*!

**END MUSIC**