



7 minutes in heaven with...

ASHLEY WALTERS

We get up close and personal for 7 minutes with the star of Channel 4 series Top Boy - Mr Ashley Walters...

Feature: Melissa Lewars
Image: Sai Photography

The TV series Top Boy was a ratings hit, what was the aim of it?

Top Boy's aim was to expose the authorities and almost embarrass the government for their negligence with regards to the position people are in, as well as the ongoing crime.

Are you working on any music at the moment or are you concentrating on your acting career?

Yeah, I'm definitely working on music. Music features heavily in my life right now, more so than ever. My official EP will be out this year.

When are you most at ease and do you let yourself go?

Times like now! You know the pros and cons of having a job that is a hobby for you is that you never really stop. The other day I was chilling next to my wife just tweeting to promote my mixtape, not even saying a word for like 45 minutes and it's not until she walked out the room that I realized I had to stop.

What would be a successful 2012 for you?

I aim to complete two independent movies and take an active part in directing at least an episode of Top Boy 2. I'll be producing a TV show for

Channel 4 and also working with Noel Clarke to create a feature film that will be like the UK version of Bad Boys.

What do you think differentiates a boy from a man?

Many things. Being a man means to know yourself and be comfortable being yourself. A boy doesn't understand this and will probably look to please others. Whether a boy grows into a man depends on whether he had the right role models. To be honest, I did not have the right role models and I'm still working on my own growth as a man.

How do you woo a lady?

(Laughs) I don't have to woo a lady! Not saying that all I have to do is turn up, but I think as long as I make it there on time I'm good! I've been with my wife since I was 16, but when I look back on our earlier days I did the normal things – you know, chocolates and flowers. We have so many kids now and the fact that I work so much means we don't really have the time anymore!

How do you turn down ladies who approach you?

I believe it's important to show love and be able to talk to someone properly. I like meeting new people but of course there are women who stop me in the street and clubs and I just have to be honest: I don't mind talking to someone but anything else, and I'm not interested. And I'm actually quite shy at times! Back in So Solid I was the one who stood back in the crowd while the others chatted up the girls. I didn't really know how to talk to girls for a long time.

Are you pro Valentine's Day or are you against?

(Laughs) Against! All men are! But of course I participate – I don't think I have a choice! There's nothing worse than hearing your woman tell you what presents her friends received from their boyfriends. So I'll do the card thing and a rose.

What is the best gift you ever received from a woman?

I don't even know. I'm cool with whatever. A friend once rented me a Lamborghini for the day and that was cool.