



The longer we go into this 2010 NBA summer of “Hey Everyone, Look at Me” free agency the more convinced I am that LeBron James is staying right here in Cleveland when it’s all said and done.

The reason James will remain here isn’t because the Cavs can pay him more money. At least that’s never going to be the reason you hear. Clearly it plays a part whether James or anyone else will admit it.

And despite what LBJ says in the press conference announcing his decision it’s not going to be because the opportunity to win championships in Cleveland is greater than it could potentially be elsewhere.

No, the answer as to why James will ultimately remain with the Cavaliers is actually two-fold with the first, umm, fold actually being a question.

So, without further adieu, the two reasons LBJ re-signs with the Cavaliers (And no, I'm not playing around here. This is what it's going to come down to).

Part 1) Would you know Savannah Brinson if she knocked at your front door?

Part2) Cody and Cassidy Gifford (Or Britney Spears' kids for those under 40).

The young folks out there are not going to understand this. Even those beyond young may not get it if they don't have a wife and kids. That's cool. Everyone in those groups can call me foolish and continue discussing the beach life in Miami and the clubbing opportunities in NYC. They can talk about Chicago's shopping and the glitz and glamour of living in Clipper-Land near Brangelina.

There are plenty of reasons for a young dude to head to any of those locales and soak in the life.

But not James. Not for any longer than a couple weeks for vacation or business anyway.

LeBron James is a father and apparently a pretty devoted "common-law" husband despite the fact common law marriages aren't recognized in Ohio any longer. James is an Akron kid and an Ohio boy and he's built himself a very comfortable existence right up the road from Akron in Bath, OH. That's where he built his huge home and that's where Savannah and LeBron raise 5-yr old LeBron James Jr. and 3-yr old Bryce Maximus James.

Did you know the names of his kids before I mentioned them? Did you know he took Savannah to her high school prom in 2003 during his first season in the league (and no, I'm not saying that fact alone means James is staying-read on)?

I ask again; if Savannah Brinson and her two kids rolled up to your front door right now would you know who the hell they were?

I think the fact it's even a question is significant and goes a long way toward telling you where James ends up after he gets his face time and headlines every damn day until maybe Labor Day.

LeBron James isn't and has never been interested in making his kids Cody and Cassidy Gifford. In fact, very quietly, he's gone out of his way to make them everything but Cody and Cassidy Gifford. He's not Will Smith out there hawking his children on Oprah and looking to get them into movies and television before their voices change.

James has gone out of his way to keep his relationship with Brinson private as well. You know nothing about her; you hear nothing about her and you rarely see her. That's by design. Brinson is a striking woman. She'd play extremely well as Cleveland's version of Elisabeth Hasselbeck, Sally Gardocki or Connie Dieken. You think it was because she didn't have an 'in' to a gig like that or because maybe she and LeBron are good with how things are down in Bath where she's quietly raising kids?

LeBron James is one of the most recognizable people in the world. He's banked tens, if not hundreds of millions of dollars. Yet his lady and his kids live and walk around NE Ohio in relative anonymity. You have to work at that kind of anonymity and in order to work for it you damn sure have to want it.

I know many of us tend to dismiss what LeBron's mother Gloria says. She was in the public eye eight years ago when she gifted LBJ the most famous Hummer outside of those allegedly handed out by interns in the Oval Office and she was locked down by LBJ and his friends...err...management group after a couple of very public screw ups. But in the rare opportunities Gloria has had to speak since being put on LeLockdown she flat out said James wasn't going to end up in New York. Based on her reasoning he wouldn't end up anywhere else

either. "He's a hometown boy", she said.

Yeah. He is a hometown boy. And regardless of the money he makes and his ability to import friends and relatives to live nearby wherever else he'd go, that 'wherever' wouldn't be home either. Home for James is a comfort level beyond monetary comforts. It's the ease at which he can maneuver around Akron and Cleveland. It's a docile and toothless media that leaves him and his family alone. It's not having to worry about some toolbox snapping pictures of his kids or their school and the safety and peace of mind that all of that creates for LeBron.

Chicago is a Midwestern town too, I get that. But it's not home and it never will be. It will be a different place and it will come with fanfare and curiosity and media demands that James isn't going to want to deal with and isn't going to want his family to deal with.

"What if his life ain't Ozzie and Harriet and what if he does have an occasional dalliance?" you ask.

Okay. That's not your business or mine but it seems to me that LeBron and Savannah are still raising their kids together. If it's the way you say do you think the media documenting his every move and the big city tabloids making shit up even when nothing is going on is the best way to manage those 'dalliances'. No sir. What I know is that James and Brinson have been together for years and are still raising two kids together and giving those kids the very best they can while bringing them up.

James isn't jeopardizing his career or relationship or the stability and peace and quiet his children enjoy for less money in an unfamiliar city.

Just not going to happen.

So you can continue being dragged through the wringer while LeBron elevates his Q Rating and Stephen A. Smith spews three rumors based on impeccable sources every single day until these guys sign. You can talk yourself into the fact that each rumor regarding James somehow makes sense. You can ride the roller coaster that each rumor starts in your stomach and your

head.

Maybe in some way it fills a hole during the dog days of summer and provides some excitement.

But use your head and your eyes and see if that changes things.

I'm going to use what I know, what I see and what I've experienced in my own years on earth, which included moving a young family to a strange, new city for what I thought was a better opportunity.

Understand that opportunity is not synonymous with happiness. Neither is change necessarily.

This is all going to end one way; LBJ is going to get his 30+ days of free publicity and the Cavs are going to get an earful of LBJ telling them what he needs to win a ring. Then the Cavs, with urine running down their legs, will breathe a huge sigh of relief when James signs another three year deal for the max right here.

And if the Cavs can't find Batman his Robin in the next three years and they can't win a ring during LBJ's next three seasons then what happens next is on them.