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Zach On Why Didn't Use His Power And Why He Still Has No Regrets

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Zach Cornell. Photo: CBS.

By John Powell – GlobalTV.com





Some would say he sacrificed himself to keep others safe in the game. He put their interests before his own. Host Julie Chen-Moonves even gave him one of her infamous smack in the head with her cue cards. The way Zach sees it though, he thought he had the votes and the allies to keep himself safe. Big Brother is a high risk, high reward game and he was willing to go all in.

John Powell: You've had a really roller-coaster week. How are you doing?

Zach Cornell: I feel numb. It's been insane this week. Obviously I'm not in the house anymore but like I said, I'm forever blessed to be a part of the Big Brother experience and I still stand by my actions. I've told everyone this morning that I still stand by them. I have my reasons. Hindsight is always 20/20, the perspective of outside of the house is always 20/20 as well. I didn't know a lot of the things that I've been told this morning, right?

John Powell: 'Auntie Julie' gave you a smack upside the head.

Zach Cornell: Oh, absolutely! (laughs)



Zach Cornell. Photo: CBS.

John Powell: We know why you didn't use the power. What was your perception? I mean, if you're willing to take that big a gamble and that big a risk, what was your perception of what was going on then?

Zach Cornell: Well, look, here's the deal. Nobody, up to that point, told me that I was a target. Nobody. Everyone told me that Vince was a target and Keanu obviously has caused enough trouble in the house that he was a second option. The way that Ava described stuff, with Vince having his hand in every single pot and Keanu having that outburst with Ava earlier, that was my perception. Nobody told me that I was a target.

I didn't find out until probably two days leading up to the eviction. That's obviously after, once Catherine closed the box and everything was all set in stone. If I had known that I was in hot water clearly I would have used the power. If I had known that Vince had thrown me under the bus clearly I would have used that power. If I had known that Morgan had said some things, you know what I'm saying? There's a lot of things that I found out after the fact. I meant it when I said it. They were my ride-or-dies. In that moment, it made no sense to me to put up a ride-or-die with another ride-or-die and we would have been in the same situation.

John Powell: You went to Ava and you tried to get an explanation from her about why she nominated you in the first place. Were you ever satisfied with any explanation that she gave you?

Zach Cornell: Absolutely not. You guys have given me a better explanation than she did. I'm being serious. I had a hunch. I had this gut feeling that Mickey had said something to her. I knew she was close with Ava but it was one of, it's tough to talk about it now because immediately after the night, after I was sitting there with Morgan, I was pissed, I was heated. I told her we're going to make it out of this and we're going to pivot to working with Riley and Katherine. I'm done with Mickey. I think she's the real reason. Morgan calmed me down the next day. Morgan had a lot, a lot, a lot, to do with the fact that I threw in all my eggs with both Morgan and Mickey in that moment. I just had to ride with them.

I never got an explanation. I did find out that maybe Will had something to do with me being on the block, and Mickey as well but I don't fault them for it because at the end of the day, it is a game. From a personal standpoint, I still love them to death.

John Powell: Is one of the reasons why you didn't use the power is because Ava would have gotten the \$10,000. Was that even a consideration in your mind?

Zach Cornell: No, it wasn't. It really wasn't. Ava getting the 10K? I was heated in the moment. I don't even know if I had spoken on this but I was so pissed that I was telling the camera, "There is no way in hell that girl deserves my \$10,000." I had said that but that's not where my mindset was. I was really frustrated in that moment but I was thinking about it from a logical perspective. It's a massive gamble with my life in the game. If it does come out on top, though, I'm sitting pretty. That was my thought process because I still have the power. People trust me even more because they know that I have the power, the people that are closest to me, and we can use this to our advantage to make jury and then play the game from that point on.

That was my thought process in that moment. It was never Ava. Ava Pearl, I love you, girl, for real! No hard feelings! I understand you had to do what you had to do! It was never that. That was never the reason.

John Powell: You must have been thankful for one thing because Will did vote for you to stay whereas Morgan didn't. Does that reflect anything in your mind when you look back at how those votes fell?

Zach Cornell: No. I mean, look, my mindset at the very end is that there are four middle votes. It was Riley, it was Lauren, it was Mickey and it was Morgan, right? I knew that they were going to vote as a block. I was expecting it to be more along the lines of six or seven votes rather than eight.

One of the reasons why is I thought that Ashley was going to vote for me no matter what. She woke up that morning and started freaking out because she's like, "Zach, I don't think you have the votes." And so I'm like, wow! You tell me the entire week you're voting for me, and now, at the very, very end, right before I have to go compete in this Block Buster, you're telling me if I don't win, I'm screwed? That was how I felt about it.

My game relationship with Ashley was just so rocky and it was 'frustrating', is the best way to describe it. From a personal relationship, I love the girl.

I knew Will had my back. Morgan, I knew she did have my back but it sucks when it's two of your closest people are on the block together. You do have to make that choice. I told Lauren: "Look, I really care about you from a personal standpoint and a game standpoint but do what's best for you. Like, legitimately do what's best for your game and I'm not going to hold it against you." That's really where that came from.

John Powell: You may be a victim of this too but there are too many players in the house playing it safe, making safe moves. Now, you come from a competitive background. Did you notice that in the house? Was it frustrating to play in that kind of atmosphere?

Zach Cornell: It made me really upset. Week one, I'll give Vince a pass because you just don't really know everybody. Week two, with Jimmy, the whole Amy and the whole Will nominations didn't make sense to me. I understood Amy because, in my eyes, she was a floater and I did want to get floaters out of the house but it didn't make sense to me at all to put Will up.

Week three frustrated me because Ashley was the clear-cut vote, the person that should have gone home. Adrian was somebody that I thought both Lauren and I could have used really frustrated me.

Week four, obviously, with Ava, that was kind of the first time that people went up that people perceived to be playing the game. Obviously, I got the short end of the stick in that moment so I respect Ava for actually making some type of game moves in that moment.

I think the "what if" here in me is that Rachel stayed in the game so long. That's like, that made no sense to me! I made it clear as day to everybody if I won HOH, she was going to be my fourth nom. I was never giving her two opportunities because if she makes it to the final two. She's winning the \$750,000. She has my vote because that girl, she had to survive so many different things and the fact that she had won and people are still allowing her to be in this game makes zero sense to me. It makes absolutely no sense to me whatsoever.

John Powell: Well, especially since the excuse is, "I need to keep a target in the game." Meanwhile, they keep sending home and putting up, nominating, people who really don't pose much of a threat. You're obviously shocked that nobody's gone after her yet?



Zach Cornell. Photo: CBS.

Zach Cornell: It has infuriated me, John. I will say that it has really frustrated me. The way that I would have approached it is if I won HOH I would have put up probably the same. I would have put up a Keanu, I would have put up a Kelly but then I would have backdoored Rachel. I would have straight up told Keanu and Kelly, "You're not my targets. I know that, Kelly, you've survived this game nine times. You keep winning. You're a comp beast and I need you to win to pull yourself off so I can put Rachel up."

I would have put Ava up because nobody's going to vote against Ava. That's literally my game plan heading into that week. And it makes me so mad that nobody else did that.

John Powell: Did you have a hard time separating the personal from the game? Because a lot of people do.

Zach Cornell: I think you're referencing two scenarios: it was the Adrian and Will vote, and it was obviously the power situation.

Lauren was in a group of three with me and Vince. Morgan was in a group of three with me and Vince. So, like, that was my thought process in those moments. I did not want to expose Lauren in that moment.

Adrian and Will, to me, were 50/50. If I had any type of preference, I would have said something. I would have stepped in. However, I didn't because of the fact that Lauren would have been in deep water if she had to make a choice.

And then, with the whole deal with Morgan, like I said, she would have been on the block with my other close number one in this game and it made no sense to me to waste that power if we still had the opportunity to take one of ourselves down and we would have been in this game.

I know I was gambling big. I know that for a fact but I told myself, "I'm here to play Big Brother," which is ironic to say because I could have saved myself. Gambling and keeping that power would have been massive for this week's specifically with Rachel being HOH. I would have been a third nom, would have been able to pull myself off. We would have had the opportunity to stay in this game at this point in time. That's what I'm trying to make very known for this reason: if Rachel had won, that's why the power comes in handy.

John Powell: Despite everything, you still got \$10,000 in your pocket. Do you have any plans for that?

Zach Cornell: I've been telling people, my mom has done so much for me growing up. I've told her ever since I was in college once I have enough money I want to take her to Wimbledon, which is very ironic because I gave a London trip to Will, right? (laughs)

She's my number one and I want her to be proud of the way that I did play. With this trip I'm going to be able to take her and bless her and the rest of my family. That's really what I want to do with the 10k.

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