

MICROPHONE CHECK



CASHIN' IN

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Rumors and allegations have plagued Cash Money Records since they inked a distribution deal with Universal in 1998. Intra-family fighting and legal battles have caused a dark cloud to hover over the multi-platinum Cash Money Millionaires. Although featured on projects such as Juvenile's "Welcome 2 Tha Nolia" and major singles like "I Need a Hot Girl," 20-year-old Turk, one-fourth of the platinum-selling Hot Boys, is the only Cash Money member not to have a solo joint under his belt. Please believe that there are rumors for days: whispers of drug abuse and legal woes surround trunancies at various concerts and appearances.

Today in Marina del Rey, CA, Tab "Turk" Virgil gets his hair braided while deciding what outfit to wear for a photo shoot to promote his upcoming album, *Young & Thuggin'*. And you get the feeling that there's more at stake here than the usual solo stress.

THE SOURCE: You're a father to a 5-month-old boy. Does having a shorty give you a different outlook on life?

TURK: Yeah, because I used to be a troublemaker while I was rappin'. My son changed my life a whole lot. I had an attitude, but I slowed down. I used to think it was all

about me.

Was it that "all about me" attitude that kept you from completing the Ruff Ryders/Cash Money tour?

The police got me twisted in something I didn't do, but I got it taken care of. I was in a place like jail, but it wasn't jail. They had me in a special place by myself.

Did that have anything to do with drugs and the rumors that you were using and/or selling?

I never sold no drugs and I ain't on no drugs. I mean, I smoked a lil' weed before, but really I [just] drink. And I

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don't even drink no more. A sober mind is the best mind to have. All that other shit is rumors. Say somebody wanna come up to you after a show and get an autograph. I might be tired or somethin'. Sleepy. But they like, "Aw, they don't wanna sign the autograph. They on drugs!" Naw, we tired and been working all day. Like right now, I'm tired.

You grew up in the same housing projects as Juvenile, but you signed on late to the family. How did you get down with Cash Money Records?

I think it was around '97 or '98 I decided I was gonna start rappin'. At the time, it was Juvenile, B.G., Wayne and a female named Magnolia Shorty. I was cool wit' her from the Magnolia projects. One day I told her, "Hook me up!" I was playin' and she really did it. Baby and Slim called me over there to rap. I rapped to 'em. And they gave me a card. I kept callin' and callin' 'em. They finally told me to come to the studio. Juvenile was doing his first album, *Sofja Rags*. They let me get on the hook, and ever since then I been down with 'em.

What role does Baby and Slim play in your life besides executive producing your album?

Baby and Slim been like a daddy to me, man. I respect them both because they took me and Wayne in when they didn't have to. Growin' up in the projects without a daddy; just my mama, my two lil'

brothers and me. Livin' off welfare; it kept a meal and that was about it. We had to go to Goodwill and get clothes—shit that people done already wore. I had to wear a pair of tennis [shoes] every day for six months. When they got scuffed

Seems like you recently got bit by the acting bug with your role as Teki in *Baller Blockin'*. What other interests do you have?

I played football. I was a running back when I was 14 years old. I stopped playing football 'cause I felt like rappin'. After this, I wanna get into real estate.

A lot of rappers are either buying real estate for themselves or to help out their old communities. Do you feel obligated to give back?

Yeah, man, because these white folks makin' it hard for us. I wanna be the man behind [the scenes] makin' all the rules, and my son keeps me motivated to do my best. Lil Wayne, B.G., Juve and even The Big Tymers have LPs under their belts. And here you are with your first. You gotta be one patient cat.

It's not been long at all. Ya know, just waitin' for my turn to shine. I did my album in like three days. I got songs for the females on there, songs for the stunnas, the ballers. I got songs for the projects. You know, reality checks. I got it all on there. It's just a Turk solo album. I'm working on my second album now. I'm just in the studio all the time. I had that aggressiveness, but now that I got a piece of doing a solo album,

I see it's easy. It's fun doing it and it's just me. All them rumors like, "Turk can't hold his own ground." I mean, I did damn near my whole album by myself. Yeah, as far as The Hot Boys, I was the last to come in, but people gon' know.



up, I just polished 'em up and started over. It was hard. I just prayed and ask the Lord to take me up outta this hell. That's when I guess he just answered my prayers and made me a rapper. Now my mama and them livin' good. It ain't hard for us no more.