

50 Cent – “Get Rich or Die Tryin’”

In February of 2003, 50 Cent released ‘Get Rich or Die Tryin’. The album went straight to number one and sold 1.5 million copies in its first week and half of release, the highest ever for a first album. Now many people say that 50 Cent is the hottest thing in hip hop since Notorious B.I.G. However, 50 Cent’s road to fame and fortune has been a long one, and he has had many hardships along the way.



“I got shot in the face”, explains 50, “That’s not a funny thing. It’s not a joke, you could die.” 50 wasn’t prepared in 2000 when he was shot as

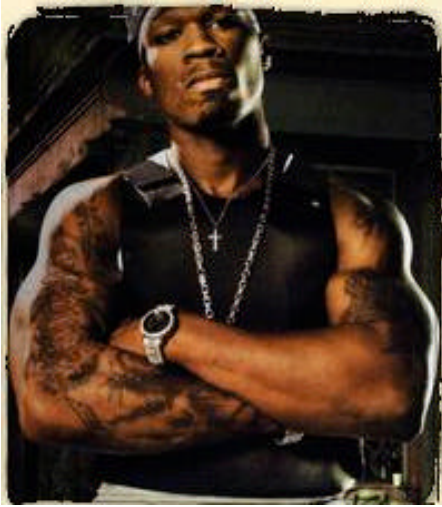
he sat in the backseat of a car outside his grandmother’s house in Queen’s, New York. He was shot several times in the leg, in his right thumb, his arm and in his mouth. The last bullet shaved off part of his gums and left a hole in between the top and bottom rows of his teeth, and made a small, but permanent, change in his voice.



"It happens so fast that you don't know what to do," 50 Cent said about the attack. "You can't move. Your first reaction is to move and then the shots go off and you jump around the backseat. I was scared the whole time. Ain't nobody gonna tell you they ain't scared in that situation. It's a hit, man. You supposed to die in that situation. They're not playing."

“After they finished shooting I was looking in the rear-view mirror like, “Oh, somebody shot me in the face!” he continues. “It burns. Burns, burns, burns. The adrenaline is pumping so fast that the pain is not really that bad until the doctors finish with you. Then the drugs wear off and you are introduced to the pain.”

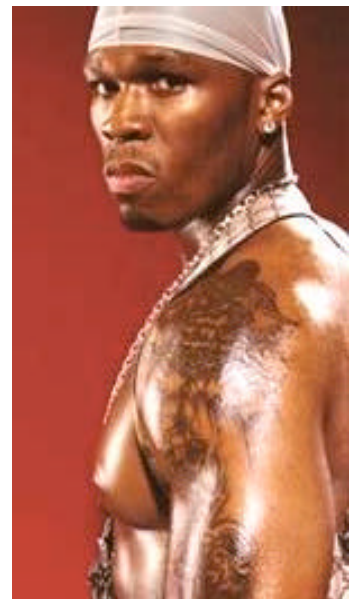
50 Cent spent 13 days in the hospital after the shooting. 50 Cent grew up living on the streets of New York. He was born in 1977, and his real name is Curtis Jackson. 50 was raised without a father, and when he was 8 years old his mother was murdered.



"My grandmother told me, 'Your mother's not coming home,' 50 Cent remembers. 'She's not going to come back to pick you up. You're going to stay with us now.' As young Curtis became a little older, he got more and more involved with gang life, and by the time he

was 12 he was on the streets of New York. He found himself getting into more and more trouble with the law and he even spent some time in prison. However, once his son was born he decided to change his life, and he began doing rap music.

After many years of hard work in the underground rap scene in New York, 50 Cent had gained a big reputation and a lot of fans. Then in 2002 the unbelievable happened. One of 50's recordings caught the attention of Eminem and within a week Em was on the radio saying, "50 Cent is my favourite rapper right now." Eminem and Dr. Dre soon signed a million dollar contract with 50, and they produced his new album which led 50 Cent to become the most popular new rapper in almost a decade.



"Undoubtedly 50 will be the hottest rapper this year," said Eminem. "I wish my first album was this hot."



But despite 50's new found popularity, he says that he will never leave the 'hood if he has anything to do with it. No matter how huge of a star he becomes, he says he'll remain in the streets, even if he's not there physically.

50 Cent says "I'm never gonna give up my life in the streets, because that's where I started and without that I wouldn't be able to do what I'm doing now. Maybe one day the people will decide, 'Oh 50's not hot anymore, this other guy is,' and I'm gone. And if my original fans are not there, how can I expect to stay?"

Questions

How many copies of his first album did 50 Cent sell in the first week and a half of its release? _____

When 50 Cent got shot, where was he hit? _____

The attack made a small change to something about 50. What was it? _____

According to 50 Cent, what does it feel like to get shot? _____

Can you describe how you think you would feel if somebody wanted to hurt you? _____

When his mother died, who did 50 Cent live with? _____

What does Eminem say about 50 Cent? _____

What do you think it would be like to be a rapper? _____
