

The Real Rapper!

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Professor Green grew up in Hackney just around the corner from where I live, but at a time when it was known as 'murder mile' and did not have as many white men in skinny jeans and cultivated moustaches.

Professor Green, or Stephen as his real name is, has the typical troublesome background you would expect from a successful rapper: He was raised by his Grandmother from the age of one. His mum had him when she was 16 years old and was involved in his life. His Dad was in and out of his life until the last time Stephen saw him alive which was on his 18th birthday. His dad later committed suicide when Stephen was 25 years old.

His way to success is also a typical rapper's story. He stumbled into it when he was put on the spot at a freestyling party. He has since been the only rapper to have won the LyricPad battles 7 times in a row, and he has done this 2 times. Spotted by an agent at one of his performances and the rest is history. He made a living from selling cannabis in his early days and in 2009 he got slashed with a bottle at Cargo nightclub which left him with a scar across the tattoo on his neck that spells out 'Lucky';.

Enough history. I thought I was in for a shoot with a man full of attitude but I was positively surprised. He was modest, nice and genuine. A guy I could genuinely imagine hanging out with and have a good laugh with.

In between the setups the agent interrupted to read out an email that had just appeared on his blackberry: 'Me and my friend have taken this into careful consideration and decided that we would like to have a threesome with you...'. Now - I do not know anything about these girls but being the recipient of such an email must surely be the final sign of recognition for being a successful rapper.

In professor Green's generous manor he offered me free access to his gig at Brixton Academy later that week. I thanked yes and looked forward to a night out in old Brixton Academy. I expected the gig to be good but I really didn't know what I was in for. It has been a long time since I have seen anyone work the crowd as well as Professor Green did. Everyone was bouncing up and down to his lead, hands in the air and there was not a mouth in the house that did not mimic his lyrics. Smart lyrics, troublesome history, good beats, and energetic performance = Professor Green!!!