

Cover Story

a Lamborghini Aventador SV, a McLaren 720S Spider, and a Bugatti Chiron, which he bought last summer, for around \$3 million.

He never made it to Costco, but Post loves to shop. Like most pop stars, he has an enormous closet where his footwear collection is carefully arranged: sneakers, Crocs, cowboy boots. Unlike some pop stars, he also collects firearms. Half a dozen were laid out on a bar counter, including a few rifles and a SilencerCo Maxim 9, a handgun with built-in noise suppression. He describes these weapons as toys—"grown-up Legos," he calls them—but he is also fascinated by mayhem, and mindful of his own security. (In 2018 three men broke into a California house where Post had recently lived, shouting his name; according to TMZ, they robbed and pistol-whipped the occupant.) Post is an easygoing presence, but his music suggests a paranoid streak: He has been singing about the pitfalls of fame and riches since long before he was famous or rich. "You always see this super fuckin' hackneyed shit in the movies where the guy gets all this money and at the end of the day he's in the house all alone," he says. "And that always struck a chord with me."

It was getting dark in Utah, and Post, still jet-lagged from his Japan trip, was starting to wake up, assisted by plenty of Bud Light and one can of Bud Light Seltzer Mango, which he was trying for the first time. ("Wow," he said earnestly. "This is good.") Post talks and sings about misery so much that it sometimes sounds like shtick. At Madison Square Garden, he introduced "Goodbyes," his ultra-emo collaboration with Young Thug, by saying, "This song is about sad times, and crying and shit, and heartbreak and shit." But he insists that for most of his life, he has reckoned with a sadness that seemed unconnected to anything in particular. "Middle school, I would cry myself to sleep every fuckin' day," he said. "High school, the same thing. I tried to drink some beers to get rid of that shit, but it just never goes away. And I don't think that's anybody's fault; it has to do with something predisposed in you."

Post has decided to talk more explicitly about the importance of mental health, even as his own remains a work in progress. "I'm fuckin' crazy," he said. "And it has exacerbated over the past years, since *Stoney*." Like many musicians, he worries that if he found an effective treatment, his music might suffer. But he knows, too, the risks of self-medication. A number of his musical peers have recently died from overdoses: not just Mac Miller but also Lil Peep, in 2017, and Juice WRLD, this past December. "That could have been me," Post said. One of his earliest singles was "Too Young," about wanting to survive, and he has tattoos of a number of musicians who didn't, including Kurt Cobain, the rapper Bankroll Fresh, and Lil Peep himself. But when asked whether he was getting help for his own mental health problems, Post was vague. "I am, now—I'm trying," he said. "It's difficult. Through my songs, I can talk about whatever I want. But sitting here, face-to-face, it's difficult."

Five years ago, when Post announced his intention to become a hip-hop star, lots of people didn't take him seriously. And perhaps people don't always take him seriously now, when he talks about his chaotic life and his fitful efforts to find peace. "I wake up and I'm so sore and sluggish," he said. "But that's the beautiful thing about music—for me at least. Something strikes a synapse and then you want to go and sit down at the fuckin' computer and make a beat, and then you make 'White Iverson,' or you make fuckin' anything. And that's all it takes." He paused. "I don't know. I'm not, by far, the most inspirational dude. But if I can do it, you can do it fuckin' too." He paused again. He wanted to acknowledge that this motivational line was not original: He was actually paraphrasing "Get Money," by the rapper Chief Keef. But still, he sounded like he meant it. ■

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