



MILKING THE NUTS

THE BEATNUTS COME CORRECT

TEXT BY JOEL MARASIGAN

It's Saturday afternoon, and I'm sitting at Mel's Diner in Hollywood talking to the Beatnuts and ordering some grub. JuJu orders the rotisserie chicken dinner and chicken noodle soup. Psycho Les grabs a turkey melt and fries. As we eat our meals, we manage to get a good dialogue going. JuJu is the more vocal of the duo while Psycho Les throws in his sporadic two cents—ending the answers with funny comments. Their latest album “Milk Me” is available now on Penalty Recordings.



ROCK it.
THA NUTZ



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2NR: How long were you in the music industry before you started getting paid?

J: Back in the day we did the “Jazzy Giga-ho remix” for \$1,500. Now with the economy it’s \$15,000.

PL: “Gigolo”

J: “Gigga-hoe”.

2NR: Was that \$1,500 nice money?

J: Yeah. I was living with my mother, and I had no responsibilities.

2NR: What did you do with the money?

J: I bought more records.

2NR: When you first got together you wanted to DJ and produce. When did you decide to rap, too?

J: It really started when we did that Chi Ali project with Relativity. On that project we had to do a lot of ghost writing. We developed a lot of skills right there. Right after that we jumped to “Intoxicated Demons.” We always wanted to grab the microphone.

PL: The bottom line is Relativity wanted to put out an album. They offered good money. We needed that money, so we just ran with it.

J: We wanted to do it anyway.

PL: But that money wasn’t bad, and we got to do what we wanted.

2NR: Do you remember any of the jobs you had before you made it?

PL: I worked at a pharmacy, and I also did inventory for Sleeping Bag Records.

J: I worked at my uncle’s grocery store, a T-shirt printing spot, and The Gap. My last job was at A-1 Transmissions. Not only do I know how to flip beats, I can rebuild a transmission!

2NR: Who’s holding the heart of hip hop today?

J & PL: Beastie Boys, Ghostface, Masta Ace, The Lox, Tony Touch.

2NR: Describe the Beatnuts sound.

J: Feel good music. Music that touches your soul before you hear the words.

2NR: I listened to all the Beatnuts’ albums. You could play any of the singles in a club—especially the ones with Greg Nice and Tony Touch.

PL: It works, so why not? That’s the way we

keep each other even.

J: We don’t hang out with too many people. We’ve known these people for years. My neighborhood is still the neighborhood I was born on. I still have a lot of friends from grade school. We get mad love on our block. We just filmed our video “Find up” within a three-block radius. I was like the mayor that day. A lot of people don’t have that tightness, that feeling of community.

2NR: Who have you always seen, but haven’t worked with or approached yet?

J: I’d say Jay-Z. I’ve bumped into that guy a few times.

2NR: Are you still digging crates?

J: Hell yeah! That’s the essence right there. We are DJs more than anything.

2NR: Keeping in mind that you’ve done this for more than 10 years, what are your three rules of business?

J: I think that’s why we haven’t been that successful. We don’t have any business rules. Our shit is just all over the f**king place. It’s hard



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because we're busy creating. We're not really businessmen. We learned a lot up to this point, but sometimes I think that it's a little too late!

ZNR: What would you tell an up-coming artist to look out for?

J: You should know as much about your business as your manager, your lawyer, and anyone else. You should have a team, but you should know about your business. You should always stay on top of everything regardless of how good your team is. But getting a good manager and lawyer is the first step.

ZNR: Your key to making it?

J: Shit. If I knew that, we wouldn't be talking a bunch of shit right now. Me and Psycho Les would be rich. The key? The key is to get five real live n****z and run into a bank!

ZNR: If the industry gave you one do-over what would it be?

J: I wouldn't have let Peter manage me. If we had had a person who knew what he was doing, our first records would have been really big. Those albums we were dropping were ground breaking. We would have been rich.

ZNR: Why don't you just start your own label?

J: I don't know how to run a label. It's hard. I just know how to make records.

ZNR: If you were to quit music today, what would you want to be known for?

J: For being one of the greatest producers of all time.

ZNR: If you could have produced one artist's song and made it blow up, what would it have been?

J: J-Lo's "Jenny from the Block."

ZNR: You mad at that?

J: Of course.

ZNR: Did you get anything from that?

J, PL: We got a good laugh.

ZNR: Who did that beat?

J: Trash-masters.

ZNR: What was your favorite car before you made it?

PL: '57 Chevy.

J: '73 Nova.

ZNR: Now?

J: Phantom.

PL: Cadillac.

ZNR: Who's the ideal chick for you?

J: I don't like bad girls; they can't be trusted. I like good girls—so I can turn them bad! So lock your

daughters up!

ZNR: Fave dish?

J: Steak, white rice and beans, with sweet plantains and an avocado salad. And a nice cold beer.
PL: Falafels!

ZNR: The nicest way to have your blunt?

J: Talk to the blunt man.

PL: Quick, clean and neat and with Tony Toca Bola.

ZNR: What are the three cuts you need to do to make people go crazy?

"Watch Out Wow," "No Escaping This," "Off the Books," and "Se Acabo (It's over)," which is funny because it's hot even to people who don't understand Spanish.

ZNR: You are in a unique bracket of hip hop music. You aren't mainstream and you're not underground. How do you classify yourselves?

PL: Main Ground!

J: Underwater.

ZNR: What do you like about the East and the West?

J: On the West it's the weather, the women, the laid back attitude, the business opportunities. But I'm a city boy, so nothing beats the East for me. I grew up there, so I have love for it.