

For some people the story of "Eastsyde formerly known as Eastside Crackhead," is one they have heard many times before.

Caught up in a life of selling and doing drugs, Eastsyde eventually became a homeless man in the streets of New York City where he made a name for himself rapping for money. "During one of my stints in jail someone told me about a funny sign he saw someone with while driving on the highway, I thought to myself when I get out I'm going to make funny signs and get some money too," he says. "I would also rap for people while using my sign and it just worked people just started filming me uploading it on YouTube, random people, and that's how I starting buzzing on the Internet."

What makes Eastsyde's story special is not how his life took a turn for the worse but, the upside.

Three years ago Eastsyde met Bigtime, outside a New York City nightclub. Bigtime who would eventually become his Manager states "My cousin showed me Eastsyde on YouTube, that very night we ran into him in the streets of New York City," oddly the two instantly clicked and have been inseparable since.

Bigtime happens to be a music producer and the CEO of a company that assist aspiring talent by creating opportunities to help them become more successful named www.PresentsTheBest.com Now where most people saw a Crackhead begging for money Bigtime saw a man with talent and a heartfelt story he felt needed to be told.

After careful consideration Bigtime decided that he would help Eastsyde move out of the streets, hone his rap skills for commercial success, and begin the process of making Eastsyde's dreams of becoming a successful music artist a reality. Since then Bigtime has become good friends with Eastsyde "That's my guy it's so real I bet the Benz on him."

Over the years they've been able to develop a cult following of fans that watch his videos faithfully getting hundreds of thousands of views thought YouTube, Instagram, and his Docu-series distributed by World Star Hip Hop entitled: Pipe Dreams which showcases not only his phenomenal rapping ability but also his captivating and charismatic personality as as he journeys from being homeless and addicted to drugs, to living a sober lifestyle and being a rap star. The show features some of his supporters including Meek Mill, Waka Flocka, Cam'ron, French Montana, and more.

Eastsyde has been spending time in the studio working on new music with the mindset of shocking the world, and being able to provide for his children. He has released two music videos entitled "Test Your Work" and "Deadass", which has received over six million combined views on Facebook, World Star, and YouTube. His single "Test Your Work" is a shrewd call out of some of the most successful rappers who've glorified the selling of narcotics in their music, and known celebrity drug users like Angelina Jolie, Robert Downey Jr. and Oprah Winfrey who've overcome the disease and maintain a sober and successful lifestyle within the entertainment field.

His single "Deadass" is rapidly picking up steam not only nationwide but globally receiving airplay around the world in places like The United Kingdom, Germany, Ireland, France and Australia.

Eastsyde was born Luther Ridley November 30, 1974, in Queens General Hospital. He spent the first nine years of his life, living in South Jamaican Housing (40 Projects), a place he described as drug-infested. Between neglect from his mother and the lack of a father figure Eastsyde was "a bad ass little kid -- a terror," as he recalls.

Rapping from a young age, Eastsyde listened to Kool G Rap, Rakim, & Big Daddy Kane, who influenced his life and music style. After spending a couple of years in Mississippi at his aunt's house, Eastsyde learned of the southern rap style and mixed it with New York style. This combination is sometimes seen in his music today.

When he came back to New York his mother had established herself as a prominent drug dealer going by the name of Queen B, in the crime world of South Jamaica Queens alongside some of Queens, NY most notorious drug kingpins. In the following several years, his brother would also become a drug dealer, eventually taking over for his mother. "So I always wanted to be down, I wanted to follow in their footsteps," recalls Eastsyde. Exposed to the world of drug dealing, Eastsyde began to also try to sell drugs on his own.

From a young age Eastsyde has been in and out of jail, getting a one-to-three at the age of 16 and a four-and-a-half to nine at 19 all for selling narcotics.

Upon his release from jail at the age of 25, he began once again his dealing in the drug industry. A few years later, he would see his sister's friend Gail, buying drugs from a friend and he offers her drugs for sex. "So, I just had 500 worth of crack on me, two grams of coke, and dope. So boom, I gets the cab, I always wanted her," he says, adding that they went to a hotel.

Eastsyde had only sold drugs; he had never tried them. "So she's on top of me, rolling a blunt putting crack in it. Curiosity killed the cat, I was rolling a regular blunt and I saw her do this so I said fuck it and put some crack in my blunt. I was 29 years old and it's been on from ever since," he says, recalling the start of his addiction.

A few months later Eastsyde would meet his wife and get married. However, secretly his drug habit was already set in place.

"I got a job at Target and on pay day she meets me there but sometimes I make up an excuse cause I wanna go get high real quick," he says. "I end up staying outside for two days and call my wife when my money is gone, my addiction got so bad I even sold my wedding ring."

His marriage began to fall apart and after the birth of their second child it only made the situation rougher, and his wife began divorce proceedings.

Eastsyde eventually would be kicked out of his home by his wife and he began to take his drug habit and street dwelling to another level. "Basically the moral of the story is that I would love to be able to take care of my kids, that really wasn't me, it was the drugs. Cause my ex-wife tells me to this day, you are funny and good if it wasn't for drugs you would be the perfect man," says Eastsyde.

Eastsyde been working non-stop on turning his life around, attending a rehabilitation program and working with Bigtime on his music, docu-series, and was even featuring in the hit web-series "Money and Violence" on Tidal. They're currently working on his debut album "Pipe Dreams" and production on a new Television Pilot titled: "Live it Up Regardless."

Social Media Handles

Instagram @EastsideCrackhead

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