

DEREK: THE MAN BEHIND THE MYTH OF MUDDY D

Written by Kiera Nusbaum

An overconfident karaoke-bar rapper proves his artistic integrity
with an autobiographical documentary.

Knusbaum@chapman.edu
(818) 271-4494

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

Sitting in a dingy garage on a Craigslist couch is DEREK (32, a "creative") speaking directly to us.

DEREK

There is something to be said about poetry. It's not words on a paper. It's melodies, it's conversations, someone's smile when, you know, you've made a difference in their lives. And how they view the world.

He gives this a beat before getting up and resetting the camera. He sits back down in the same position, breathes.

DEREK (CONT'D)

The smiles on my fans' faces is really why I do it all. To me, that's the real art.

More satisfied with this take, he turns off the camera.

INT. MAN CAVE - NIGHT

An old Dell desktop finishes its laborious loading process. A hand clicks the space bar and a VIDEO on screen begins:

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

DEREK

When you hear the name Muddy D, what comes to mind? Flashes of fame, fortune, cash, diamonds, boobies? All of those things might be true. But I'm not here to tell you the story of Muddy D. I'm here to tell you MY story. The story of Derek Garbanzo.

SUPER: DEREK: THE MAN BEHIND THE MYTH OF MUDDY D.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Dim-lit, mostly-empty, a theater ballad drones. The camera approaches: LINDA (55, in queue to perform Cats).

DEREK (O.S.)

Hey. I'm making a documentary.

LINDA

A documentary! That's lovely!
Is there a celebrity here?

DEREK

Yeah. You're lookin' at him.

LINDA

Oh! My apologies, Mr-

DEREK

Muddy D.

LINDA

Mr. Muddy D. Hm...Maybe my kids
have heard your music.

DEREK

Likely. I'm doing pret-ty good on
SoundCloud this month. Upwards of
1K streams. Anyways, I'm making a
documentary. On me. If you could-

He passes the camera off to Linda, clearly unprepared. She fumbles and turns just in time to catch Derek SPRING onstage, the show tune screeching to a halt. He physically SHOVES the performer offstage. The crowd gasps.

DEREK (CONT'D)

I know, I know. It's not everyday
you get to hear a performance by
the one and only: Muddy Deeeee!

He holds for applause. None comes.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Alright, you've already heard most
of my Greatest Hits. How about a
bit of a deep cut?

He pulls out his phone, fiddling with it for an awkward beat.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Hold on, uh. Just a second.

The patrons stare, unimpressed. Only more so when the "music" begins: a concerning amalgamation of 808s and off-key guitar.

DEREK (CONT'D)

*When I was a youngin, I always
stayed thuggin. I didn't have pies
or blueberry muffin.*

LYRICS appear in sing-along format over shaky footage.

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

DEREK

My lyrics only way I feel I can
truly, truly express myself to this
uncaring world.

He pulls out a notecard and begins to read off of it.

DEREK (CONT'D)

I didn't have pies.
(getting emotional)
Or blueberry muffin.

INT. NURSERY - NIGHT

CAMCORDER footage of DEREK (1) cooing from a crib.

DEREK (V.O.)

Of course, I took inspiration from
the wise Snoop Dogg. I still
remember my mom singing his
melodies as sweet lullabies.

JULIANNE

(singing)
*When the pimp's in the crib ma,
Drop it like it's hot.*

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

DAVE (64, well-mannered) and JULIANNE (60, blindly
supportive) sit on the edge of the couch.

DAVE

My name is Dave Garbanzo, I'm a
pharmaceutical salesman, and I'm
Derek's father.
(faltering)
What do you want me to talk about?

DEREK

Me!

DAVE

Right. Well, from a very young age,
I knew that he was...special.

JULIANNE

At home, he was always singing and
putting on little performances for
us. He could even read by age 9!

DAVE
 (a bit disappointed)
 Somehow, I always knew he was going
 to be an artist.

JULIANNE
 I knew when he was cast as the
 Little Drummer Boy in the Christmas
 Nativity. Everyone said they had
 never heard a rhythm so creative.

INT. MAN CAVE - DAY (B&W)

Derek paces around in a reflective mood.

DEREK (V.O.)
 When you're a creative, everything
 can offer inspiration.

He picks up a sock and ponders this.

DEREK (V.O.)
 Ideas for lyrics can really strike
 at any time. Ideas like these are
 precious, and I can't let them go
 just because I don't have any paper
 around. Art isn't always
 convenient.

Derek writes on his arm in sharpie: SOCK.

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

DEREK
 Have I ever thought about pursuing
 something else? That's a really
 good question. I wouldn't limit
 myself to the title of rapper; I'm
 not a one-trick pony.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Derek photographs a weed in the sidewalk.

DEREK (V.O.)
 If I had to give my job a title, it
 would be: a "Creative."

INSERT: The picture of the weed in B&W. SUPER: "Hope."

DEREK (V.O.)
When you have this many ideas, it's
really impossible to capture my
perspective all in one art form.

INT. MAN CAVE - DAY

Derek works on an unimpressive sketch of himself, surrounded by dark scribbles. "Noticing" the camera, he shoves it away.

DEREK
Don't look at my sketches
yet...they're not ready.

INT. MAN CAVE - DAY

Derek photographs a model, LANA (36), with an unlit cigarette in her mouth, shrouded in all black.

DEREK (V.O.)
I'm really into photography. I
shoot on 24 mm, a lot. I'm
fascinated by the female body. I
honestly believe there's much more
worth to it than its simple
promises of sexual pleasures.

Lana drops the pose and sticks her hand out. Derek goes to pose her again but she smacks his hand away.

DEREK (V.O.)
No, I know what you're thinking.
Not my girlfriend. Though she would
be if she had her way with me.

Lana grabs her purse and shoves her way out of the man-cave.

DEREK (V.O.)
She's more of a muse. I'm currently
in-between women at the time. But,
I'm too busy with my creative
endeavors and my...side gig.

INT. DEPT. STORE - DAY

Derek, suited up for Risk Management, sets the camera on a shelf, flexing for the camera. Linda approaches.

LINDA
Excuse me, do you know if I can use
my Kohl's cash after it expired?

DEREK
Uh, no ma'am. You can't use-

LINDA
Wait, you look so familiar. Are
you...are you the young man from
karaoke? Poopy P?

Derek's demeanor entirely shifts. Muddy D is out of his cage.

DEREK
Muddy D. Yuh.

LINDA
Oh, good to see you again! I had no
idea you worked here.

DEREK
It's more of a side gig type shit.
Do you want me to sign something?
For your kid?

He snatches her handbag off her arm and begins to scribble.

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

DEREK
It's not easy, being recognized in
public. I feel like everywhere I
go, it's: "Muddy D! Sign my tits,
Muddy D!" I mean, can't a homeboy
get a little privacy?

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Muddy D hops on stage once more.

BARTENDER
Oh God, he's back.

PATRON
Why does his arm say "sock?"

DEREK (V.O.)
But at the end of the day, I do it
because it's my calling. I create
memories. I create feelings. I
create stories. I create art.

From the bar, Julianne sways off-beat, holding out a lighter.

JULIANNE
Woo! That's my son!

INT. MAN CAVE - TALKING HEAD

DEREK
I am more than Muddy D. I am music.
I am art. I am Derek Garbanzo.

The video cuts to black. A drive is ejected from the computer and pulled from the socket.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Chest puffed up, Derek poses in front of apathetic SECRETARY (40), typing away at her desk without looking up.

DEREK
Excuse me, miss. I have a meeting
with Snoop Dogg.

SECRETARY
Mr. Dogg doesn't meet with fans.

DEREK
Check your schedule for "Muddy D."

SECRETARY
He's in Ibiza right now.

Derek watches her, his confidence unwavering.

DEREK
After Snoop hears my melodies,
you're gonna be calling me on his
behalf begging for a feature.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Derek storms out, slamming the door behind him. Holding the drive, he sizes up the height of the building. He takes a deep breath and THROWS the drive into an open window.

DEREK
Boo-yah.

He turns around, smirking. Behind him, the window slams shut.

CUT TO BLACK.