

THE SURVIVOR

Eugene rapper **Endr Won** has been through a lot to get where he is today: married, a father and touring the U.S. supporting his latest release, *Bigger Than Me*. “It’s a blessing,” Won tells me over the phone from Salt Lake City. He calls life on the road a lot of work. “But what’s beautiful,” he adds, “is being able to take the gift that I have and reach other people.”

Bigger Than Me is available on all digital music and streaming services, and it’s Won’s first new music since struggling with addiction and mental health issues. “I’m a recovering addict and alcoholic,” Won explains. “I used to actually live on the streets of downtown Eugene. I’m diagnosed with anxiety, depression, PTSD. I was going through some things.”

Won says a friend encouraged him to get back to writing and performing. “He said, ‘I know it’s been a minute since you put pen to paper,’” Won recalls, “‘but I know you still got the fire in you and people need to hear your story.’” And getting back in the game rekindled Won’s love for hip hop. “I believe wholeheartedly in the culture of hip hop,” he says. “I believe that hip hop with substance, with a message, is something people yearn for.

Now, Won says, he’s humbled by tying for first place in *EW*’s Best Singer-Songwriter category. “To say I’m humbled is an understatement,” Won adds. “The life I’ve lived, just to be breathing is a blessing, let alone rap and travel cross-country and have people care to listen.”

Won calls his fans family. “Anybody that knows me knows I could really care less about being in some kind of competition,” he admits. “My competition is with my man in the mirror. It’s an honor to think people out there listen to my music and love my music enough to vote for me.” —*Will Kennedy*

**BEST OF
EUGENE**



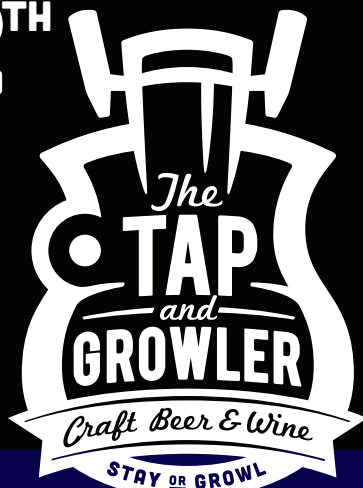
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