

One day, 070 Shake was on the floor searching for quarters. The next, she was in a Miami penthouse.

The 19-year-old singer and rapper from North Bergen, NJ, had never really considered making music, but she'd often soothed her depression by writing poetry. One September day in 2016, a friend mentioned a brother with a recording studio and she felt a tug. Why not marry her words with music?

Stepping into the booth for the first time ever, she recorded "Proud," an achingly vulnerable reflection on teenage rebellion and rejection over a gently swaying, bittersweet beat.

"At that time I felt like I made no one proud, but I always envisioned myself as a leader," she says. She posted the song online and social influencer Julieanna "YesJulz" Goddard—who eventually would become Shake's manager—found it, tweeting, "Where's this boy?"

"I was like, 'I'm a girl and I'm here,'" Shake says.

Indeed she is, and she's not leaving anytime soon. In less than two years, 070 Shake has racked up millions of Soundcloud plays; featured on everyone from Lil Yachty to Fabulous records; appeared onstage alongside artists like Sonny Digital, Pusha T and Desiigner; and garnered praise for her "gritty realness" that places her in a "category of her own" (Highsnobeity). Signing to GOOD Music / Def Jam in 2017, her appeal is obvious—thick with emotion, her smoky voice cuts through a never-ending throng of hollow-voiced public figures obsessed with wealth and superficial pleasures. In a world more consumed than ever with consumption, 070 Shake's honesty and heart are desperately needed.

"It's not time for talking about money. We have to talk to people about real shit," she insists. "If you project these things to people, they are going to think you need that to be happy. No. You need love."

Growing up, 070 Shake had plenty of love, if not money. Her parents were divorced, and because her mother struggled financially, Shake was sent to live with various family members--the Dominican Republic with her grandmother, Colorado with her aunt and uncle, who writes Christian music.

She listened mostly to rock music, particularly John Mayer, the Beatles, Kid Cudi. "I listened to things with feeling," she says. "The Beatles didn't really care about materialistic things. I wanna bring it back to that. There's a difference between music that bumps and music you *feel*. 'Imagine' is one of my favorite lyrical songs. The words are pretty simple, but just the meaning in general."

In her early adolescence, she sunk into a deep depression, and poetry was her escape. Still, pouring her heart onto the page couldn't quell her rising rebelliousness, and she

soon was getting suspended from high school for pranks like stealing the frogs from the science lab.

Once she graduated, however, she underwent a stark change. Experimenting with psychedelics, she dove into Plato, Socrates and the Bible. “I became a new person. I had 100 tabs on my computer and learned all this on my own. After that I was reborn,” she says. “I felt like I didn’t need all the LSD. Felt like a trip from learning.”

Realizing she had a heart for the kids in her city struggling in an overcrowded school system, she tagged herself “070 Shake” in tribute to her city’s zip code. She started putting music to her poems and “vibing out.” She’d never recorded until “Proud,” but once the seal was broken, she knew she’d found her passion, the way she could change the world—through music.

“I just wanna help people find love. And make everybody happy,” she says. And, perhaps something a little easier to accomplish: “My goal in life is to make my mom proud.”