

Get in trouble, as Thebe Kgositsile did from a separate house — the bus barn — more or less alone, waiting to be allowed to rejoin the group. Mostly he would get into trouble for always sneaking onto the Internet, trying to check in on his other life, 5,000 miles away. Before leaving his native Los Angeles he'd made a name for himself as Earl Sweatshirt, the most intense and talented rapper in Odd Future, the crew that in the last two years has helped upend hip-hop business models, remade ideas about the meaning of the rap under the ground and stoked the hip-hop culture wars as no act in recent memory has, thanks a lot to its rowdy, outlandish and sometimes offensive content and its motormouth front man Tyler, the Creator. Much of the early Odd Future buzz centered around Earl Sweatshirt, whose video for "Earl" was a teen-rebel fantasia of drug use and other misbehavior. A provocateur with a dry wit and an outrageous gift for wordplay, he was a clear inheritor of Eminem's macabre humor and Lil Wayne's dyspeptic logorrhea. He was a savvy, schooled rapper: gross, entrancing and thrilling. And also one of the only pop mystery doing interviews, he was nowhere to be seen. In a time of Internet-speed information flood, Earl Sweatshirt's absence — he was sent to Samoa by his mother — a striking rarity. He returned to Los Angeles in February maybe more popular than he would have been if he'd never left. In his absence Odd Future had used the Internet to trump old ways of doing things. Earl Sweatshirt, by largely staying off the Internet, found himself benefiting from all that had happened and with a bully **pulpit in front of him.**

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***What Would He
Say Next?***

