Therapy means something different to everybody. For some, it involves sitting in an overpriced shrink’s office and lamenting life’s trials and tribulations for an hour. For others, it’s as simple as swinging a golf club or hitting a punching bag. As with everything, Tech N9ne possesses his own perception of therapy, and that’s codified in his 11-track 2013 EP, *Therapy* *– Sessions With Ross Robinson* [Strange Music].

Like all effective sessions, this one saw the Kansas City rapper physically and creatively stepping outside of his comfort zone in order to achieve the best results. Instead of holing up at his own home studio and Strange Music HQ, he flew out to Los Angeles and stayed at a waterfront Venice Beach hotel mere steps away from the studio.

Moreover, Tech enlisted the talents of legendary rock producer Ross Robinson [Korn, Slipknot] to achieve a hard-hitting, instrument-driven sound unlike anything else he’d previously done over the course of thirteen full-length studio albums. Top-notch musicians such as Wes Borland of Limp Bizkit and Glassjaw’s Sammy Siegler built the sonic foundation for many of the tracks alongside longtime producer Seven’s beats. Every step of the process proved equally frightening and fulfilling for the artist.

“I was always against going to psychiatrists,” he admits. “I’m usually my own psychiatrist. Music is therapeutic for me. However, I went to one, and his name was Ross Robinson. We would just talk in the studio. It was super uncomfortable initially. A lot of your raw thoughts are embarrassing. I don’t typically share like that in front of anybody. Ross made me pull those out in front of him. He talked to me in a different way.”

With only two weeks booked, Tech immediately immersed himself within Robinson’s unique “treatment” program. In the morning, he would sit on the producer’s roof or on an abandoned couch in the sand and stare out at the water, dictating rhymes or scribbling them on his pad. Then, in the studio, every emotion would be cut to tape.

“This was a first,” he goes on. “I’ve never worked with somebody else on a project and created from scratch. After I would finish writing lyrics, Ross would set up a mic so I could look out at the water while I was recording. It was such a beautiful experience. I fell in love with Venice Beach. It felt free—like I could say whatever the fuck I wanted to say. It was raw energy.”

That energy courses through the first single “Hiccup”. Fortified by Borland’s signature six-string snap and guttural grinding drums from Siegler, Tech fires off a snarling, syncopated rhyme that’s as tough as it is tribal.

“It came to me in a dream,” smiles Tech. “The beat has a punkish feel. There are certain things I wanted to touch on with that song like Charles Ramsey. It’s about evil people in the world who think they’re going to get away with bad things, but there’s always a hiccup in their plans because evil shall not prevail over angels. These ideas were on my mind—whether it’s the horrible stories you hear or things as strange as Twitter beefs. I’m proud of it.”

In between the songs, conversations between Tech and Robinson drive the EP’s narrative. Whether it’s about conjuring “The Ghost”—his newfound scream—or understanding the fairer sex on the psychedelically powerful “I.L.L.”, these vignettes open the window remain into *Therapy*.

[ROSS QUOTE]

He goes on, “For ‘I.L.L.’, I wanted to speak from a wolf’s point-of-view with his tongue out and dripping over a female. Ross was like, ‘This just can’t be about fucking. You’ve done that before. It’s got to be about passion. Let everyone know you appreciate the female species.’ I’m used to doing everything. He let me know I don’t have to do everything myself. We made something beautiful together. I got to let go a little bit because we’re all a team. My perspective was shifted.”

*Therapy* is all about flipping perspectives. There’s the gnashing guitars and primal scream of “Public School” featuring Krizz Kaliko, railing for better education, and the cleverly chaotic rock-infused stomp of “Head Now” featuring Bernz and Wrekonize. The latter was reactionary to events in Tech’s life. *Something Else* recently led to his highest debut ever on the *Billboard* Top 200, hitting #4 and moving over 58,000 units first-week, but things were far from perfect.

“So much love started coming my way,” says Tech. “The same people who hated on me and called me a devil worshipper were ready to suck my dick now. It was ironic. I’m good though. I’m saying I don’t need any ‘Head Now’. I’m getting that off my chest.”

That honesty has remained paramount for him since the beginning. Since first bursting on to the scene in 1990, Tech has risen through the ranks to become the most successful independent rapper. He’s sold over two million records, garnered universal critical acclaim, scored a gold record for the single “Caribou Lou”, been sought out for collaborations by everybody from Lil Wayne to Five Finger Death Punch, and packed venues worldwide.

Ultimately though, *Therapy* sees Tech challenging himself and hip-hop once again. “This whole experience was new for me,” he concludes. “I want fans to enjoy it on that level. We did it outside of my comfort zone and outside of Strange Music. This is raw instruments. It’s a thrill for me. I don’t think this is going to be my last *Therapy* session with Ross Robinson.”

*Therapy* is good for everyone…