NOAH CYRUS (PAG.80)
BY ROBERTO CROCI

I've don hundreds of interviews, and trust me I have never seen a more punctual artist then Noah Cyrus, 18 years old, famous lineage, voted 30 Most Influential Teens by Time, while she walks through the door at The Barker Hangar, our location for the photoshoot @ the Santa Monica Airport.

"The album (NC17) actually isn't happening anymore" says Noah Cyrus seated on a sofa - "I'm putting out 7 songs as an EP called Good Cry and it has been following me and my personal emotions, because my life has been completely chaos in the past year. I went through probably the worst thing in the world with the breakup from my boyfriend, while I was on tour with Katy Perry. I would cry myself to sleep every night, so it was this kind of very toxic part of my life I would say being in the relationship I was, in which kind of caused my emotions that are in this EP. I got a lot of anxiety and I have a lot of depression still, that's just who I am as a person. I like being the black-sheep of the family that's like darker and a little weird, my family would ask "Why is Noah up in her room with the door locked?" I was just watching weird shit on YouTube and stuff. I've been very vocal about anxiety and depression, because those are things I've dealt with for a long time, especially whenever you're in a untrustworthy relationship with somebody, it can cause insecurities. So that's kind of what the EP is about, it's about my emotions of everything that's been going on in my life and why I'm sad. I'm totally cool with it because I've been sad since I was 10 years old. That's just who I am".

Before becoming a professional singer, Noah enjoyed one of the most normal childhooh possible. "Growing up I was very separated from Hannah Montana, I just wanted to ride horses and go to the barn every day and be that kid, not like the Cyrus family kid, not because I was unhappy with my family, but because people treated me like a normal ten year old kid. I grew up riding with people that experienced the same things, I rode with Destry Spielberg, Bella Hadid, Gigi, I got to grow up with these kids that came from these famous families but also went and rode horses as their escape from the public eye, we just wanted to have a childhood. But I always liked to sing, my dad and mom taught me piano and when I was 15 I decided I wanted to try to do music. I feel like I communicate so much better through a song than I do through talking".

2 words about her style. "I was born Emo and I'm still emo. I'm always in street clothes, comfy sweats and tennis shoes, maybe a little tight top. I honestly just dress in the most comfortable shit possible, I think if you're comfortable that shows your sexy side, its not showing off your body or skin as much but showing off your comfort with yourself and your self-confidence". For inspiration she chooses sbjects and themes from her everyday life. "Where do I get inspiration from? Life. Basically right now I feel like my songs are about when life just shits on you, when you are down and hurt, when you are almost drawning in sorrow. I'll think about something that makes me really upset, like when I was in my past relationship I'd be sitting there sick and thinking, I'm gonna get cheated on and then I'd sit there and hurt my own feelings, but then I was like "fuck this." I'd rather hurt my feelings than let someone else hurt them".

Noah, lilke the prototype of the new generational advocate activist girl IS really involed, even if she doen's want to dwell on politics. "Honestly I don't talk politics very often. I put on a song called "We Are Fucked" and it explains everything, there was so many women who fought to have abortion and now we're going backwards. People like Emma Gonzalez from the Parkland shooting, she's gonna change the world and there's a lot of people like her that are going to change the world and it's really important that people with big platforms, which is why I admire Miley so much is that she uses her platform for really good things, LGBT+ community, Happy Hippy foundation, she can make people listen. It is very important we are sticking up for gun violence and abortion control and all of this stuff because our world is very crazy, what's going on in the world at the moment, is really sad".

A GIRL (PAG. 96)
BY DOREEN BAINGANA

Me, I was just a girl by then – fifteen – washing clothes for the new army. Then this soldier called Byaruhanga became my husband. I did not choose him, he chose me. He smiled at me and asked me my name as he gave me his dirty uniform and things. And that evening when I was giving them back to him, folded like my mother had taught me, underwear hidden under the shirts; he called me into his room, smiled, and told me to stay. He gave me some money and kept me safe. It is not easy working in barracks, but the new army came and they had money and work. Byaruhanga kept me from the other men and he was always smiling, and the extra money helped us: my mother and the smaller ones.

Yes, I am Acholi and my father, already dead by then, was a soldier. He got sick and very thin, his hair fell out and then he died. My mother was the one who said I should wash clothes at the barracks. She re-tied my cornrows new and tight before I left, she took off her rosary and put it over my head, and laughed when it bounced with my new breasts as I walked, but when I came back with more than enough money, she twisted her mouth as she took the folded notes and she removed her rosary from my neck. I stopped coming back home many nights, it was easier to stay at the barracks with Byaruhanga, just to avoid her twisted mouth and open hand, which reached out like Byaruhanga's.

You should have heard the things they said about us northerners, those soldiers, Byaruhanga too. Me, I just kept quiet, but in my head I repeated the things my father had said about them. Weaklings. Matooke-eaters. Shape-shifters. Not even real Ugandans.

That week the battalion was getting ready to leave, to go back to Kampala, so that a fresh group could replace them. And I was going to have a baby; in about two months, the nurse at the clinic in town said. Byaruhanga and I did not talk about my growing stomach. I did not know how to ask. He did not tell me to pack my things to go with him. He did not say I should tell my mother I was leaving with him. The last time I saw her, by accident in town, she looked at my stomach, not my face, and chewed her cheeks. Would she accept me back? I don't know. Wasn't she the one who had sent me here? But she had not told me to smile at Byaruhanga, to stay nights. He did not say if he would go and come back, or if he would send for me, or that I should leave and go back to my mother. How do you ask a man things like this? It would be as if I was the one asking to marry him, and not the other way around.

Would I even be able to climb up onto that army lorry with my big belly while the men shouted in their funny Kiswahili, which was not even correct, like ours? At night, close together in the dark like we were the same person, I tried to teach Byaruhanga proper Kiswahili, but he just copied my accent and laughed. He rubbed my swelling stomach, but only in the darkness. I wanted to leave with him, but I feared going south. I had never been past Karuma Falls. How could I live in a place where they don't speak Acholi? What language would my child speak? What if Byaruhanga stopped smiling, what then? I was there outside, washing his clothes, washing out the sweat-and-cigarettes smell that I liked. I thought of how I might have to wash for him for life. Would that be so bad? Other soldiers were also there, around in the compound, lying in the grass, joking, happy that they were soon going back home to eat matooke and see their wives and children, back to the lights of Kampala. Tshala Mwana was on the radio, with her wail of a starving cat: " Nyayo-o." The sun was hot on the back of my neck as I bent over the basin, which was difficult because my bulge of a belly was in the way. Byaruhanga was in our room still sleeping off last night's drink.

Then there was another singing, like locusts, like a whole field of angry bees, and I realised it had been at the back of my mind all along. I, we, all of us, had been waiting for it. It was like chanting church moving closer and closer, but no, today was Tuesday, not Sunday. Which pastor would dare come to preach here? The voices were deep and rough and grew into thunder. I stood up straight to look, my back aching– this baby was the heaviest thing I had ever carried. The bushes rustled like there was a herd of goats in there and my baby jumped. They came out of the bushes: dark shiny heads, bare shiny chests, red eyes, white teeth, stamping feet, chanting. I fell.

All around me, men were shocked still. Byaruhanga crouched at our door, a picture, frozen. My baby hit me again inside, and I knew that all my questions would be answered, now, like this.

Huge stones flew and landed with a thud, but one hit that soldier Mutanda, who was lying under the lone flame tree, with its small red flowers. Red burst from his head like a flower and his scream seemed blood red too. Then everything moved. Grown men, soldiers, scrambling, running, falling down, screaming, a stampede. I scuttled across the ground like a cockroach and somehow made it to our door and Byaruhanga pushed me in behind him. As I crouched in the corner, he, who had been on all fours, suddenly fell forward flat. He made the same sound he made when he fell on me at night. I watched his legs twist aimlessly on the floor, and I thought: I know him. I know that man. I know how he falls.

Don't tell me about noise, it is inside me now. Shots like hammers hitting my ears, trying to break in, and that gleeful chaotic chanting: louder, louder, a whole mountain falling on my head. I pulled our blanket from the mattress on the floor and over me to stop it.

After I don't know how long, minutes, half an hour? In a moment, the singing stopped. I heard them moving around, in and out of the rooms, calling out to each other: they were speaking my language, Acholi. I was shivering like I had malaria, my arms over my head. Footsteps came closer and the doorway grew dark. A dragging sound: Byaruhanga was pulled outside. "One more!" someone called.

Two heavy steps inside: "Wewe!"

I did not move. I could not. More footsteps and another one entered, came up and shoved me with his foot. My blanket fell off. He pushed my arms from my head: "You woman, what are you doing here?"

I moved an arm around my belly, another back over my head, cowering deeper. My nose started to drip, drip, drip. I let it.

"Leave me. Leave me please?" My voice a thin scratch. "Malaya! You had to come to these scum to be fucked?" He nudged me harder with his foot.