

Corey Taylor

Slipknot and Stone Sour's frontman on masks, Abba and ninja swords...

Hi, Corey. Where are you right now?

I'm in Des Moines, Iowa. I just picked my kids up from school.

So you're on a break from touring? It must be hard being away from home all the time.

Yeah. It's kind of few and far between, but you just try to make the most of that time. If you spend too much time at home, you waste that time. So I try to get as much out of it as possible. It could be less, you know...

You took off the mask when Stone Sour released. Did you suffer any repercussions with your anonymity gone?

For me, the mask was never about holding on to some kind of anonymous *thing*. It was always about expression, about tapping into that primal side – really being able to embrace it and have fun with it. Stone Sour was a band *before* Slipknot and I didn't wear a mask then.

Does your mentality change when you jam in Slipknot, with the mask?

I can definitely open up more as far as the darker side goes. I think everybody has that side, and we choose to either control or stifle it. I've always chosen to control it. It's definitely easier to tap into that when you're strapping a crazy mask on. Then again, it's such great therapy. I had a discussion with a psychiatrist who's actually thinking about using masks on people to get them to open up in sessions.

Do you wear different masks, and do you get involved in the design?

We design all our masks ourselves. I've always been very hands-on, just trying to capture what I'm seeing in my head. With everything, there's an evolution. Our music has evolved, so our masks have evolved. Mine and Clown's have probably taken the biggest steps.

Your new one is, erm... lovely.

It's kind of a reaction to the "pretty-boy" thing that I was getting with Stone Sour. I was like, "Oh, *really?* Well, check *this* out!" It's been very effective. People say it's unsettling.

Any other musical projects going on?

I've got my cover band – The Dumb F**ks – made up of some friends back home, that I play with every New Year. And there's JBKB (The Junk Beard Kidnap Band). We play funk/rock/stoner/disco – we call it "junk funk".

Okay... We heard rumours you've also had a Tenacious D cover band?

Yeah, it was called Audacious P! We (my friend Josh Brainard and I) did some charity events and stuff. It was a lot of fun. We haven't done it in a while, but we're talking about getting it back together and doing a little one-off!

Your favourite bands at the moment?

I've really come to dig Airbourne while we were out on the Mayhem Festivals with them. Also, The Red Chord and Underoath.

A dude in our office rocks Bon Jovi. Do you have any guilty musical pleasures?

Ha, ha! I kind of wear my music out there for everybody to see. Like, I'm a big Abba fan. I challenge *anybody* to put on Abba and *not* wanna shake your ass! That's a true story!

Not very Lord-Of-Metal-ish, Corey.

I don't believe in guilty pleasures. Your heart knows better than your head what kind of music you like. So I like everything from Slayer to Sarah McLachlan.

Do you know that Slipknot is massive here in South Africa?

I've heard whispers, but I've never really assessed to what extent, to be honest.

We're stoked to be the ones to tell you.

Well, we're gonna try get there as soon as we can. Things are in the works.

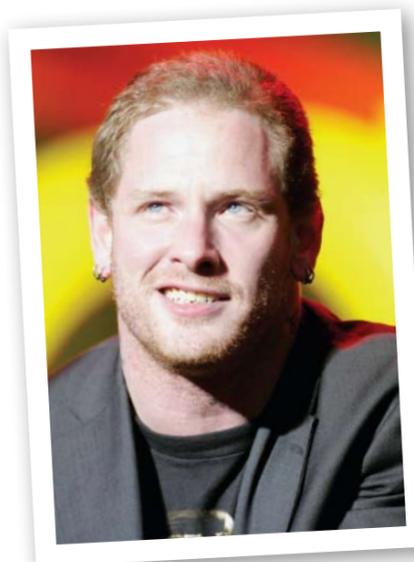
Slipknot seemed to have mellowed out over the years, only to drop *All Hope Is Gone*, and it's seething with outrage. How do you turn the anger back on?

I'd love to say that there's a process, but I'm just inherently angry! Ha, ha! I hate to say it, but there's a lot of stuff that pisses me off, and I'm enough of a loud-mouthed extrovert that I refuse to sit on it. I guess I have reserves of animosity. At least I'm not just sitting there going, "The world is screwed!".

People in SA tried to blame Slipknot for a high-school kid who killed another kid with a ninja sword. What are your thoughts on that?

I think that ignorance always breeds a scapegoat. People need to take a look at the person who did the harm, wonder what was wrong with *him* and not worry about what music he was listening to. I'm telling you right now, the day a country-music listener kills someone will be a day when they go, "Oh, well... that person

Do you have any guilty musical pleasures? I'm a big Abba fan and I challenge anyone to put on an album and try to not shake your ass!



Have you ever been physically threatened by religious conservatives?

I tend to get into theological debates, but I haven't been *physically* threatened. I've had death threats, though. There's obviously a problem when you threaten in the name of "God". You can't speak to somebody like that. All they know is weird, fundamental revenge.

was *obviously* crazy." But if someone's listening to a metal album, it's automatically the music that inspired them. Never mind the fact that he was allegedly on drugs. Never mind the fact that he obviously had a mental condition. No, it was the music. We're not the first band to get blamed for it, and we're definitely not gonna be the last. So, to anyone who wants to say that – prove it.

There are nine guys on stage when Slipknot perform, and the shows are pretty intense. Have you sustained any serious injuries over the years?

Well, yeah. We had some serious injuries on the last tour. Sid [Wilson – turntablist] broke both his heels. Joey [Jordison – drummer] turned and broke his ankle. It was insane. But, everybody's healing. It's just another casualty.

Have you ever personally done yourself severe harm on stage?

Oh yeah! Sid and Clown used to set my legs on fire! I've even played shows with scratched corneas. I've had staples in my head. You know, the list goes on. It's almost like being in a football team, dude. It's pretty insane.

What's your pizza topping of choice?

Any kind of chicken. That, or bacon.

Lastly, tell us your favourite joke.

I can't, man! Ha, ha! I got kids in the car! **FHM**

WORDS: GORDON LAWS. PHOTOGRAPHS: GALLO/GETTY IMAGES, PICTURE NET

