



“I’m so fast that last night I turned the light switch off in my bedroom and was in bed before the room got dark.”

FIGHTIN’ WORDS

A legendary graphic designer compiles **ALI’S** punchiest quips

When it comes to talking trash, Muhammad Ali could have knocked most of today’s MCs out the booth with both hands tied behind his back. The legendary boxer, born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. (he changed his name after announcing his conversion to Islam in 1964), was not only a beast in the ring—his fifty-six pro wins, Olympic gold medal, and three heavyweight belts still weigh in as the most impressive record of all time—but he was also a monster on the mic. Twenty-five years after Ali put the gloves down for good, graphic designer George Lois, who created some of the Greatest’s most iconic imagery during his stint as *Esquire*’s art director (1962–72), takes a swing at gathering the Champ’s gift of gab in *Ali Rap* (ESPN/Taschen). It’s a knockout collection, but here are just a few of our favorite blows:

“I KNOW I GOT IT MADE WHILE THE REST OF BLACK PEOPLE ARE CATCHING HELL, BUT AS LONG AS THEY AIN’T FREE, I AIN’T FREE.”

“I AM AMERICA. I AM THE PAST YOU WON’T RECOGNIZE, BUT GET USED TO ME—BLACK, CONFIDENT, AND COCKY. MY NAME, NOT YOURS. MY RELIGION, NOT YOURS. MY GOAL, MY OWN. GET USED TO ME.”

I HAVE RASSLED AN ALLIGATOR!
I DONE TUSSLED WITH A WHALE!
I DONE HANDCUFFED LIGHTNING,
THROWED THUNDER IN JAIL!
ONLY LAST WEEK I MURDERED A ROCK,
INJURED A STONE,
HOSPITALIZED A BRICK!
I’M SO MEAN I MAKE MEDICINE SICK.