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CHEROKEE SPORT

INTERVIEW

played it by myself, in my room or whatever.

Angela: So you were learning as your band started?

Caithlin: Yeah. Not this band, I was working with a couple other people at first, before Rainer Maria, but that was only for like 2 months. I guess that really does have an influence on how I learned. I never thought about it. Just like only playing in a live setting with other people, so there's a lot of room for integrating your instrument already with two other musicians.

Angela: So the best way to learn is play with other people?

Caithlin: Maybe, when you're starting out, maybe.

Kyle: To play at all, I think...

Caithlin: Just to play at all, yeah.

Caithlin: I think if you know people that are willing to be patient, 'cause Kyle was basically still learning how to play guitar. Bill was like the only one who was experienced when we first started.

Bill: No, not even.

Caithlin: So we just all learned. In each song we try and challenge ourselves personally. I think that's what it comes down to.

Angela: (to Kyle and Bill) How long have you guys been playing your instruments?

Bill: I don't know. Like seriously, like practicing every week, maybe 5 years.

Kyle: I started in the summer of '95. Well, I'd had a bass, a Rickenbacker bass guitar, around the house for a year or so before that, so I was used to fretting a couple notes. And I'd lived with someone who played the guitar, so I picked it up and learned a couple songs, but I couldn't really play anything. So seriously, all the time, for like 3 years now. We're the total self-taught person's band. We don't know what we're doing. It's like all fake.

Caithlin: I can't read the fret board or anything. It's all by ear. Yeah.

Angela: Another thing I've been wondering, in the song "Never in Anger," who is Jean Briggs?

Kyle: Never in Anger is the title of a book and Jean Briggs is the author. She was an anthropologist.

Caithlin: She's still alive, right?

Kyle: She's still alive. I think she's teaching somewhere. Actually, we should send her a copy. She lived among the Inuit in Canada for a while...alright, it's like this: she's living with the Inuit, things are going pretty well, Whitey comes along for hunting season and wants to steal these boats. You're living in very tight conditions with maybe 10 people, you're basically trapped in these 3 igloos for the entirety of winter. Their whole culture is necessarily based upon restraint. You can't go off on anyone because you'll all die if you get in a big fight. That's like the cultural background. So these guys come up and try to make off with these boats, and she starts screaming at them and says, "Forget it, we need these boats, these people need these boats to live, you can't take them." Because the Inuit won't, because of their culture, defend themselves. They'll give the boat up to whoever because it's a culture based upon restraint. So, long story short, the Inuit don't understand what she's saying because it's in English, but they see her go off. As a result, they exile her within the culture. Winter comes, and no one speaks to her for 90 days. And so the song is about her experience of not being spoken to for 90 days. I just read the story and was like, "Wow, you're trapped in the snow-bound setting, with no one speaking for you for 90 days even though there's people around you." I thought there was some metaphorical territory to be mined. So that's what we tried to do.



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