



"YOU GOTTA KEEP EVERYTHING STRONG"

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THE GO-TO BAND FOR ANTHEMIC BLUE COLLAR HARDCORE, WISDOM IN CHAINS RECENTLY DROPPED THEIR LATEST SCORCHER, 'NOTHING IN NATURE RESPECTS WEAKNESS' AND IT'S ANOTHER WORK-BOOT STOMPING SMASHER. WITH THEIR CUSTOM MIX OF OI, METAL, AND OLD SCHOOL HARDCORE PERFECTLY EXEMPLIFIED IN THE VIDEO FOR SINGLE, 'ALREADY DEAD', TOM BARRY CAUGHT UP WITH GUITARIST RICHIE KRUTCH TO GET THE LOWDOWN ON THE NEW ALBUM AND THE THRIVING PENNSYLVANIA SCENE THE BAND REPRESENT.

"PA has always been a strong state but right now it's at its strongest - between the shows, This Is Hardcore, and the bands, it's hard to really mess with PA at this point. When it comes to this type of music, people are actually living it you know what I mean? They're actually living it."

Routinely allowing himself only two to three hours' sleep a night in order to fit in the band, running Fast Break! Records, hosting The Post America podcast, and working a job a hundred miles away in a neighbouring state, Richie knows

what "living it" means more than most; indeed, the new album's title fits the band's approach to a tee, "The title is taken from a line in one of (NY rap legend) Thirstin Howl the Third's songs. The first time I heard it, I liked it and that was years ago. I always kept it on the back burner and when it came to naming this record, it was a title we could all agree on. There are many aspects to it y'know? You'll crumble if you're weak and it's too bad we can't lay around and not take care of our shit and survive the storms. You gotta keep everything strong, from your house to your finances, you gotta keep everything strong, otherwise weakness

sets in and it crumbles. If the foundation of a house is weak, it's gone, it's done."

From their early bands - Krutch, Feeble, and Out to Win - through to Wisdom In Chains, group founders, Richie, and vocalist, Mad Joe Black have proudly carried the PAHC legacy with them around the world. When it comes to recording, a good ninety percent of the band's output has been created in the same local studio, with the same producer, just down the road from their homes. They helped build the scene and they're notably proud of it, "Aside from older bands like Strength For A Reason you have newer bands like Code Orange and Jesus Piece making a big mark. Kids here just take it serious man, they love it. If you go to a show four or five hours away you see PA kids that jumped in the car and went - they're travellers, they push stuff, there's no ego here and everybody's on the same page, so it's definitely a great place to be, especially with the pool of bands 'cos there's so many diverse styles."

But for all the talk of the Pennsylvania scene, Wisdom In Chains seemingly play shows as much outside of the US as within. The origins of the band are closely tied to Europe, the Netherlands to be



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precise, "Wisdom was really started by Maarten from Daredevil in Holland. He started it with the idea of it being an old school band and he wanted that vibe, but when he was out of the picture and it was all American members, we retained that old school vibe but also wanted to do whatever we wanted musically if it fitted and we could figure out how to incorporate it, keeping the vibe of 'Whatever It Takes' era Krutch."

The band's numerous European excursions have given them a strong following on the continent, with Richie and the guys only recently getting back from their latest European tour, "Germany is probably the strongest European country for us, and not far behind, Belgium and Holland. But Germany consistently. I think maybe because of the booking agent being based in Germany, if we do a European tour and its fifteen shows, nine of them are in Germany and that's always been the case. But even if we hit Europe randomly, if we do stuff in Poland or the Czech Republic, those shows will be great but maybe that's 'cos it's so rare that we go there. Germany would be the hotspot, Belgium right behind it. We got a good history with Belgium, especially with

English bands like, Knuckledust taking us there back in the day, ever since that point there's been a lot of friendships built up in Europe."

Since becoming an all-out American affair, the brawling old school attack of Wisdom In Chains' sound has been tempered with a thoughtfulness of songwriting absent from many of the other bands playing the circuit. They are definitely not a band who leave the studio before they're done, "We're not like a full-time band, although it might appear like we're a full-time band but we all hold down full-time jobs. So, since we're not a full-time band if we're gonna make an album, we're gonna make it at our convenience not with somebody from a record label saying, 'OK, now is the time to make an album' and meanwhile we didn't write anything 'cos we're constantly on tour. When we record, we know we got enough stuff ready and feel comfortable with it."

Owning their schedule and taking the time to craft their tunes has resulted in a slew of classic fist-in-the-air anthems over the group's tenure - from 'Class War's', 'Cap City' and, 'My Promise'

to pretty much every tune from their debut, 'Die Young'. With, 'Nothing in Nature Respects Weakness' however, Wisdom In Chains have fully pushed the boat out with some seriously epic musical jaunts thrown into the mix this time round. Richie goes on to explain that it was all part of the plan, "It's like - I'm a fan of hardcore and I have so many friends who are fans of hardcore, and what I notice is that with their favourite bands, they don't play them in their car when they're driving. They don't listen to their albums but they love to see the band live. I always wanted to have an album that people would play on their own and listen to beginning-to-end, keeping their interest like a classic rock type of album where they can go to what they consider a heavy song, then to a ballad, then to something different; I wanted to have that kind of album but hardcore, you know what I mean? Something you could sit through, you could take a trip - it goes up and down you're not worried about just finding your two favourite tracks and then putting in the next band." 🐾

NOTHING IN NATURE RESPECTS WEAKNESS' IS OUT NOW ON DEMONS RUN AMOK