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Tucker Beathard chooses to rock on instead of play ball



Tucker Beathard's parents weren't too thrilled to hear about their son's intentions in pursuing a music career, but by then he had already made up his mind.

Out of high school, Tucker says he was poised to attend Middle Tennessee State University, funded by a baseball scholarship. He called his coach, apologized and told him that he wouldn't be coming to practice anymore.

From now on, his sights were set on music. His dad, Nashville songwriter Casey Beathard, expressed his concern.

"It's not that he doesn't want me to do it," says Tucker, 22. "My parents definitely wanted me to take advantage of getting my college paid for and to keep playing sports."

A similar life path had been taken by Tucker's brother, C.J. Beathard, who played college football for the University of Iowa and is currently a quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers. But

Tucker's passion for music topped any interest in school or sports.

"I was sick and tired of doing what didn't make me happy anymore," says Tucker. "I threw away the scholarship and just dove in."

With his dad in the music business writing songs for artists like Kenny Chesney, Trace Adkins and Gary Allan, it's no wonder Tucker found himself drawn to music.

It started off as a fondness for the drums when he was just a toddler banging on pots and pans with sticks, but he eventually learned to play guitar and would often write songs as a teenager. Tucker says he wrote the most when he was grounded by his parents.

"I was always battling a lot of things inside and would get into some trouble and stuff like that," he says. "I started writing a lot when I was grounded and got out those emotions."

Tucker always saw himself as an introvert, never the type of person to wear his emotions on his sleeve or feel relaxed in big crowds -- most of what people "see on the outside is a whole different story with what's going on inside," he says.

"Being onstage and singing and playing my songs is when I feel the most comfortable. That's when you actually get to feel satisfied with expressing yourself and letting it out."

Tucker got his first taste of what that felt like when he was 15 years old. He remembers he was grounded at the time and wasn't trusted to stay at home by himself. His dad had some work to do, so he brought Tucker along.

"He thought I was going to run away or burn [the house] down or something like that," says Tucker. "He brought me out to one of the songwriter rounds he was doing. I'll never forget that night."

"He called me up onstage and said, 'Why don't you play them that song that you wrote? You wanna come up and play it?' It was the first time I ever performed, sang or played guitar in front of anyone. That was definitely a life changing night."

The singer signed to Dot Records and released two singles since 2016, "Rock On" and "Momma and Jesus." The former song he co-wrote with his father.

His career has only just begun, but Tucker is taking in every bit of experience he can. Each day provides a new lesson he can learn from, a new goal to strive for. It takes a lot of work, but Tucker is unfazed.

"There were a lot of hard times," he says. "I remember we drove a van from Nashville to Montana to Washington to the coast of Oregon and then all the way back to Nashville some weekends."

Which meant lots of sleepless nights for Tucker and his crew of musicians.

"That's kind of what it's all about, for me," he says. "You learn a lot and you grow a lot and you have a lot more life lessons and a lot more stories and places that you're setting yourself up for to write about. There's a lot more depth to put in your life experiences to translate into songs."

Growing up in a music household, Tucker says he gravitated more toward the rock genres and would rather listen to drummers like Neil Peart or John Bonham. But it was his dad that gave him an appreciation for country music songwriting.

"I fell in love with the songwriting craft," he says. "I love the way he crafted songs and what he was saying and how you could really feel the emotions and believe what he was writing."

That's something Tucker strives for as well and believes may be missing in some of today's country music, which he says, lyrically, is "getting watered down" and repetitive and missing its heart.

It beats inside Tucker and spurs his willingness to learn, to change and to grow as a musician, which could be enough to propel him to the place he wants to be.

"Every day you're always growing and learning something -- it's a really cool job in that aspect," says Tucker. "You get to see the whole world and do what you love and get to play music for people and meet a lot of new people and places."

"That's all I want to do. It just feels right."