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TRAVIS DENNING PICKED UP THE GUITAR WHEN HE WAS 11 AND 'NEVER PUT IT DOWN'



"At the core, I just want to have these songs that people can fall in love with and relate to," he says.

Travis Denning was just 7 years old when he was bitten by the musical bug. His dad played him AC/DC and he was forever changed.

"I remember hearing 'Hells Bells' and 'Back in Black' and going, 'I want more of that. Whatever that is, I want more of it,'" Denning recalls while chatting with *Country Now*.

A native of Warner Robbins, Georgia, Denning was exposed to all kinds of music throughout his childhood. He credits his parents, especially his father, for introducing him to such a wide variety of musical genres. He remembers hearing everything from Southern rock, to the blues to R&B and he's incredibly thankful for that.

“I was always open to different kinds of music. It’s kind of like the earlier that your parents can have you try a bunch of different foods, you’ll like a variety of foods,” he explains. “That’s how I was raised.”

Growing up just south of Macon, home to The Allman Brothers Band, a love for Southern rock was practically ingrained into him.

“From the git-go, whether you wanted to or not, you were kinda raised with this cloud of southern rock history,” he acknowledges.

As his appreciation for music grew, he “begged” Santa Claus to bring him a guitar. His wish was granted when he was 11.

“I got a guitar and I never put it down. It was the first thing that I picked up that I really loved,” Denning shares.

He learned to play and spent his early teenage years perfecting how “loud and fast and crazy” he could play it.

“I was super into rock and roll and heavy metal,” he admits. “And as a guitar player, it was awesome to hear the talent and the speed and the approach that someone like Dimebag Darrell from Pantera and Kirk Hammett from Metallica had.”



Denning’s love for country music didn’t truly begin to develop until he was about 15 years old.

“Country music was something that I really not only just fell in love with, but kind of studied,” he says. “My musical journey was so driven by the guitar until I started writing songs, or trying to write songs. That’s when I realized I can take all of these things I learned as a guitar player and I can do whatever I want. I can just be an artist.”

Once he realized being an artist is what he was meant to do, Denning made a plan to move to Nashville when he turned 21.

“I just saved up money and turned 21 on December 1, 2013 and on January 14, 2014, I was in my apartment in Nashville,” he explains. “I just saved up a little bit of money and played every club and restaurant and festival that would book me and kinda cut my teeth and then just came up here.”

Denning eventually landed a publishing deal and earned several cuts by Nashville heavy-hitters like Jason Aldean, Justin Moore and Michael Ray. He soon caught the attention of Universal Music Group where he later signed a record deal with UMG’s Mercury Nashville.

His debut single, “David Ashley Parker From Powder Springs” reached the Top 40 and served as the perfect introduction to the Georgia native. He’s back at radio now with “[After A Few](#),” a song he says is one of his all-time favorites.

“‘After a Few’ was one of those songs that I wrote before I had a record deal. When you’re writing songs and making rent and beer money on writing songs, you want to pitch a song like this to Luke Bryan or Blake Shelton or whoever,” he explains. “That was one of those songs where I wrote it and wanted to pitch it, but I was on the cusp of getting a record deal and I loved ‘After a Few’ so much that we eventually made the decision to hold on to it. That was one of the first songs that we did that with.”

“After A Few” translates well to Denning’s energetic live show, too.

“I think it’s just so indicative of what I want to bring to the table and what we are going to bring to the table,” he says. “It’s high energy and if you come to a show and see it... We try to be like Shenandoah if they were listening to Motorhead. I just want to rock and roll. That’s what I want to do on stage: have people enjoy it and go, ‘holy shit, this band is rippin’ it.’”

Travis Denning hopes to continue to release new music throughout the year. In the meantime, the rising star will take “After A Few” [on the road](#) when he joins Riley Green’s Get That Man A Beer Tour. The trek kicks off September 5.