

(1.8.20) - <https://americansongwriter.com/travis-denning-after-a-few-song/tina-benitez-eyes/>



Travis Denning Discusses Breakout Hit “After a Few”

“You know, they say you have your whole life to write your first album, and then you have six months to do the second one,” says Travis Denning. Right now, the Nashville artist has all the time in the world.

In such a short time, Denning has already co-written a Top 30 hit for Michael Ray’s “Her World or Mine” and has had other songs cut by artists like Jason Aldean, Chase Rice, and Justin Moore. His latest single — also in the Top 25 — “After a Few,” is a cautious tale about looking for relationships in all the wrong places, is just one of the original tracks off the country singer’s upcoming debut.

Laser focused on his music, the Warner Robins, GA native relocated to Nashville nearly six years ago, where crafted his sound. Working with producer Jeremy Stover (Justin Moore), Denning has already released several singles, including “David Ashley Parker From Powder Springs,” a story about someone’s identity that Denning once “stole” using a fake ID to buy beer and cigarettes. New single, “After a Few,” co-written with Kelly Archer and Justin Weaver, is something Denning says everyone has lived through at least once in their life, perhaps a relationship for all the wrong reasons. “I just wanted to capture that story of that frustration and just that moment where you go, God, why can’t I do this? Why can’t I get past this?” Denning tells American Songwriter. “And it’s almost very Groundhog Day in a sense where it just keeps coming back to here we go, right back at it.”

Denning says he wanted the music of that song to be darker, in a sense, but more cautious. After hearing the track, country artist Tyler Rich even told the singer that it sounded like “dark disco country,” which Denning says is exactly what he wanted.

Getting more exploratory, Denning took “After a Few” a step further recording a more stripped down version of the song, layered in more rhythm and beats. “When we were stripping it down and in the

studio looking at all these tracks, there was a lot of rhythmic stuff that was really intricate that you don't hear prevalent in the recorded version," says Denning. "We kind of wanted to capture that on the stripped down acoustic side and it almost came out like a Shakira song or something, which I thought was so cool. It had that beat. It's such a weird way of hearing it, and I love it."

Growing up, country music was always part of his life but Denning didn't start connecting to it until he was in his teens and starting to write songs. "I was connecting more than I ever had to the songwriting of country music and the stories," he says. "There's just that attraction to the creation beyond the musical elements, to the actual connection to somebody's heart and soul, which is words and lyrics and melody."

Listening to everything from The Allman Brothers, Matchbox 20, John Anderson, Shenandoah—even Metallica, AC/DC, and Pantera—Denning has always been open to exploring other genres outside of country. Anthemic, indie-riffs, with some country-pop, "Heartbeat of a Small Town" is one track Denning says showcases more of his influences like a train wrecking into one another. "I was always across the board (with music), and I'm happy to say I still am," he says. "I just don't want to ever limit myself on what I can enjoy. I think that's a crappy way to live."

Set to hit the road with Dustin Lynch, Denning will continue releasing singles as he jumps in and out of the studio but says there's no real time frame for his album's release. He does promise that it will be out this year, and it will be exactly what he wants. "I realized that it's my record, it's my career, and I can do whatever I want," says Denning. "I don't want be afraid to put some loud guitars on it, some rocking drums and nail all those early influences of the heavier things into the songs and the stories that I love to tell, and the story I want to keep telling."

