

DATELINE: OCTOBER 4, 2000. JASON'S HOUSE, EAST BAY, CA.

JASON & LARS



LU: WHAT IS IMPORTANT? NOT PARTICULARLY YESTERDAY OR TOMORROW, BUT WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THAT RIGHT NOW, WHAT IS IMPORTANT?

JN: (*thinking, sighs*) There's a cool thing, it's the most important... to have a connection with the people that are actually here... you know? It's unconditional acceptance and non-judgmental love and that kind of thing. So that is absolutely the most important thing, and after that I don't know in what order they would go but, friends and pride, stand-upness or that kind of thing. The real truth. Some things you are always going to fool yourself about – we know what those are. But other things that you absolutely will be truthful to yourself about, and you have to be, it's really important being able to perceive that in yourself.

LU: SO, I JUST ASKED YOU WHAT WAS IMPORTANT AND YOU MENTIONED OBVIOUSLY A BUNCH OF THINGS THAT I WOULD FULLY AGREE WITH. YOU DIDN'T MENTION THE WORD MUSIC. WHERE DOES THAT PLAY INTO THE WHOLE THING?

JN: Today. You asked about today. You didn't ask about yesterday or tomorrow. Today it really doesn't play that big of a part.

(Ed's note: the following quote refers to the time right after Jason was invited to join Metallica back in early 1987).

LU: I REMEMBER ONE OF THE GREAT MOMENTS OF THAT WEEK, WAS BEING DOWN AT THAT REHEARSAL PLACE WITH YOU AND MRS. BURTON (Cliff Burton's mother – ED) AND ALL THAT. WHAT WAS THAT LIKE? DO YOU HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF THAT?

JN: Absolutely. It's very, very clear. I could draw that for you too. I could make you a movie and print the script out for ya. Your Dad, I just remember right away, just like he always is everytime he greets anyone, was very warm. And this comes before he touches you, he's warm, you know? And his hand shake, I remember that. I can't remember exactly what he said, but it was all really cool, all positive. I was so nervous. I was actually more nervous right then than I really had been meeting you guys or meeting James and playing for the first time. When the Burtons came in, and Mrs. Burton came over, I was actually most nervous. She said, 'you must be OK because they know,' or something like that. And 'just be yourself, just be yourself'... at least two or three times she said that. That's what I remember from her words, and then just them gracing us, and just these two incredibly vibey people, you know? That hits you before they touch you too, you know? Still to this day, Ray (Cliff's father) is that way, sunshine just comes out of him, like PAHHHH! Those people are very special people. Cliff must have been something, I tell you.

LU: WHEN YOU BUILT THE CHOPHOUSE INITIALLY, WAS THE INTENT THAT IT WAS GOING TO BE THIS GREAT OUTLET OF ALL THESE THINGS, OR DID IT START LIKE MORE OF A PRACTICE ROOM OR A JAM ROOM?

JN: I always had a Chophouse, but I didn't have a physical building until about '90. But even in apartments, or especially in the house in Richmond that we rented, I had a room that had everything set up. There (were) micro-

phones and the guys from Exodus would come over and the guys from whatever fricken bands were going on then (*laughs*). They called themselves the mix and match of San Francisco thrash guys, they would come over and we'd play in there and do things and make tapes and all that from way back. So, that would have been all the way pretty much ever since I joined Metallica.

LU: SO, THIS GOES WAY BACK BEFORE METALLICA.

JN: And then it kind of got enhanced by the Maxwell thing (a ranch belonging to the Martin family, old friends of Cliff Burton). Jim and Lou told me that they always recorded everything up there and that and that just really sparked me. I'm like, 'man we always liked to record all of our stuff in the desert and everything, so that's great with me, you know.' And that kind of sparked me to do it out in California and then the brothers Martin dubbed that building the Chophouse and from then on, they always come up with good shit. As soon as it was built, we christened it on Elvis' birthday in '92 and that was the first time that we actually made a real tape with a machine and all that. It started out with the idea of being a jam room, and then as time went on we wanted it to be more of a studio in mid-construction, so some of the wires that are in the walls and things like that aren't necessarily what you would call 'studio code' you know? It's just a project studio really. But the whole idea was for it to always be someplace where people could come and just do whatever and always turn the mic's on and do as few overdubs as possible.

LU: TELL ME SOMETHING. TELL ME, YOU HAD SO MANY GREAT PEOPLE IN THERE. TELL ME SOME OF THE PEOPLE YOU WISH YOU COULD HAVE HAD IN THERE? I'M TALKING ABOUT STUFF LIKE 'I WISH JOHN COLTRANE WOULD COME OVER'... CLOSE YOUR EYES, DRIFT AWAY, LIVING OR DEAD. GIVE ME FIVE OR TEN NAMES THAT YOU JUST WISH YOU COULD FUCKING SPEND 12 HOURS WITH?

JN: Stevie Ray Vaughn, spend at least a couple out of the 12. Hendrix, it gets crazy now...

LU: GET CRAZY!

JN: Billie Holiday, Bob Marley, Jeff Buckley (*thinking*)... geez!

LU: OK, WHAT DO YOU THINK WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD METALLICA?

JN: For me, 'wow!' How's that? 'WOW!' That's my first answer absolutely. I want to do it (answer) as an outsider, I want to do it as a fan. I look at Metallica as legend, that's true. I guess integrity, and this thing that people, whether it goes up and down, people like them or don't like them. There's nothing that really goes by (in our lives) that Metallica doesn't connect to, that we don't relate to or we don't think about somehow in the back of our head. We know that it's all relating to it. I don't want to say Metallica's everything because there are so many other things that we have now created that we are as people and collectively too. So it's not everything, but it's a big part of all of us. A very important part, but maybe a little bit different than it was some years ago.