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EXCALIBOY INTERVIEW

CHUCK RUCHOK

an in-depth discussion with the creator of redneck religious rock about late night drinking, making hit records and sleeping with the wife of a television evangelist.

For those who have followed his meteoric rise to stardom, the legend of musician Chuck Ruchok is one based equally in truth and fiction. The facts that can be authenticated about his early years are few; Ruchok has been known to guard his up-bringing and teenage years like a Commie leader guards his oh so precious nuclear submarines.

Legend has it that Ruchok was born in 1957 in the tiny town of Backwater, Texas. The middle child of seven, Ruchok's father was a rig worker and his mother was "a lovely woman who hated the United States but loved its national anthem," according to her son.



Women have always found me attractive, that's the way God intended it.

Ruchok's entire family supposedly died in the kind of freak accident that only tabloids put on their front page. On a camping trip in the Grand Canyon, everyone except young Chuck was killed when aliens landed from another planet. The aliens gave the Ruchok clan a personality test and then zapped them to oblivion when they all failed. It was only by a blessing of fate that 7 year old Chuck was hunting for hubcaps when the aliens landed and was therefore spared a grisly death.

Ruchok does not claim the death of his family follows the above legend, but he doesn't deny it. Stories such as these only add to the man's mystique and appeal.

Bursting on to the music scene in 1973 with his band "Chok and the Crocs," Ruchok established a new kind of music. While The Who toyed with rock operas, and synthesizers were on the horizon, Ruchok and his partner, drummer Dave Patterson, wrote songs about God and growing up in the kick-ass state of Texas.

Their raw and religious sound was embraced by listeners faster than anyone could have imagined. "Maybe The Beatles were more popular than Jesus," said Ruchok in a 1977 interview, "but we knew that our songs were liked by God."

Leaving the band in 1980 because of its internal problems, Ruchok proved himself to be the brains behind Chok and the Crocs when he released his first solo album, Bibles and Bimbos, to universal acclaim. When Ruchok's former partner Patterson was killed in a car accident, the musician's only comment was, "God has him now, and I've got the royalties. We're both happy."

Although well-known for his desire of privacy, Ruchok agreed to grant EXCALIBOY his first full-length interview in over five years. But certain conditions were to be met. The instructions, given through Ruchok's agent, were much like Ruchok himself because they were strange and brilliant to varying degrees. But the most important condition for the interview was the hardest to fulfill: the interviewer must be clean-cut and look like a "good, God-fearing Christian boy."

Searching frantically for someone to meet Ruchok's requirements, we came upon EXCALIBOY contributing editor Kevin Pasquino. With a shave, a freshly ironed shirt and a thorough hosing down, Pasquino looked almost presentable.

Pasquino's last interview was with

free-wheeling, beer-swilling body builder Jackie LaMotta and it was felt that LaMotta's eccentricities should have given him the grounding he needed to tackle the secretive Ruchok.

"My first impression of Chuck Ruchok was that of a quiet, private man who would only offer information if he felt it was important. Questions about his early roots were ignored and he frequently asked me to turn off my tape recorder to speak off the record," says Pasquino.

"As Ruchok and I got to know one another during the three day interview, I was allowed to see a side of the man that the public rarely sees. Sensitive, intelligent and caring, are all mythical traits that the media have created to protect a man who would rather kick a helpless blind dog than donate his time to a worthy cause. He is truly a real man in this age of sickening sensitivity."

To open the interview, EXCALIBOY'S Pasquino asked the musician about the most recent of his many exploits—his sizzling and scandalous affair with Tammy Butcher, wife of PTC Club's Jim Butcher.

EXCALIBOY: While you have always been loved by the media for your various sexual encounters, your most recent affair with Tammy Butcher, wife of TV evangelist Jim Butcher, is probably your most notorious yet.

RUCHOK: Tammy is one lovely woman and I am not at all ashamed



Sure women belong in the kitchen. Where else would you keep them?

of what happened between the two of us. The only thing I am even slightly embarrassed by is all of the attention the media have given the incident.

EXCALIBOY: But the fact that Tammy's husband, Jim Butcher, is the leader of the PTC—the People that Care—Club—don't you think that would warrant the attention given to the incident?

RUCHOK: Oh sure, I can understand that, but the way you people in the media treat the whole thing, it's as if two people never fooled around before. Tammy is a woman with certain needs and desires, and Jim, who is a close personal friend of mine, felt he wasn't fulfilling her needs. He turned to me for help and I gave it to Tammy.

EXCALIBOY: And how do you personally feel about Tammy?

RUCHOK: Any woman who can take her clothes off in two minutes but takes two hours to remove her make-up is all right with me. Tammy knows beauty is only skin deep, and she wants her skin to be as deep as possible. I respect that.

EXCALIBOY: Most of the criticism regarding the events has been focused on her husband's affair with his nineteen year old secretary, reportedly a virgin at the time of their encounter.

RUCHOK: Jim saw Linda, I saw Tammy, big goddamn deal. It all balances out in the long run.

EXCALIBOY: But seeing how Butcher and the PTC Club have said sexual promiscuity is a sin and will

result in eternal damnation, don't you think Butcher's actions reveal him to be a hypocrite?

RUCHOK: Haven't you ever heard of forgive and forget?—God's like that. How about "do as I say, not as I do?" Jim's human, Tammy's human. Hell, even your editor is human. We all make mistakes. I'm not saying what they did was right, but if some people feel it was wrong, I'd hope they can forgive Jim and Tammy as I'm sure the Lord has.

My father was a real man, he didn't have to be a good man.

EXCALIBOY: So you think the new motto of the PTC Club should be "Sinning is okay, we'll forgive you"? Maybe change the title to PTC—People that Sin?

RUCHOK: No, I don't think they should change the direction of their show. As I said, Jim and Tammy are special people and special people deserve special treatment. To say that everyone should be granted the divine forgiveness that the Butchers have received is ludicrous. To think the masses should be treated like Jim and Tammy is like saying all American citizens have the same rights as the President. It would destroy the very foundation that this country was built on.

EXCALIBOY: How do you think this whole incident is going to affect your career?

RUCHOK: Do I think it will hurt me? Christ no. These sort of things—man with married woman, married man with single woman . . .

EXCALIBOY: TV evangelist with teenage secretary?

RUCHOK: Sure even that. These things happen all the time. We just don't hear about it, that's all.

EXCALIBOY: Are you saying that other evangelists are unfaithful to their calling?

RUCHOK: I'm not saying yes, I'm not saying no. But why would it be any different from anywhere else in the world?



The future used to scare me, but when you've got God on your side, piss on the rest.

EXCALIBOY: But all of the television evangelists claim to be pure and perfect. They demand this from their followers. Shouldn't it also apply to themselves?

RUCHOK: Like I said before, "Do as I say, not as I do." If anything, Jim and Tammy have used themselves to demonstrate how weak the flesh can be. Their flesh was weak, but their spirits and their faith in God is still strong. And that's all I got to say.

EXCALIBOY: Your new album, "God Blessed Me with Good Looks" promises to be your biggest ever. Clapton on guitars, Collins on drums and duets with Tina Turner, Dolly Parton and Nana Mouskouri. How did the project come about?

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