**Eastwood – It Never Gets Easy bio**

Most people know Cole Crutchfield as the guitarist of Knocked Loose, Kentucky’s premier hardcore punk/metalcore crossover outfit. Those who have dug a little deeper will also be aware he’s also the vocalist of death metallers Torture Tomb. Yet while he’s best known as the creator of seriously heavy riffs, there’s much more to him that. In fact, Eastwood – a band he started in 2016 – is a project that he hopes will shake off any pigeonhole people have placed him in because of those other bands.
“A lot of people think because I’m in a hardcore band and play death metal that I only listen to heavy music,” he says. “But I actually probably listen to indie music way more. So I think that people might be caught off-guard by this album, and I hope they are, because I want to smash that cliché that if you’re into death metal or hardcore you can’t play or listen to other kinds of music.”

That’s exactly what the eleven songs of *It Never Gets Easy* do. Written over a four year time period, the record perfectly illustrates Crutchfield’s diverse range of influences, from shoegaze to pop-punk, with even a little bit of country slide guitar thrown in for good measure. But it also serves to show off his talents as a lyricist and a songwriter. For while Eastwood – completed by guitarist Scotty McElwain, bassist Zack Hay and drummer Devin Gnagie – is most definitely a band, these are very much Crutchfield’s songs.
“It’s pretty much my project,” Crutchfield explains, before declaring himself, tongue firmly in cheek, as something of a dictator. “I wrote all the music and the lyrics, and demoed everything out and sent it to the band, although I did ask if they liked it! It’s a very different process to the freestyle writing sessions we do in Knocked Loose, because it was really just me writing these songs in my room.”
Recorded in February 2020 with local Kentucky producer Jordan Haynes, Crutchfield says that the band were in the studio every day for a month making it. They’ve released music before – 2017’s *Past Ghost* EP, a cover of Weezer’s “The World Has Turned And Left Me Here”, and an acoustic EP – but the frontman says that, really, *It Never Gets Easy* marks the real beginning of Eastwood, and the first time he’s been truly happy with every aspect of the end result.
“This is the first thing we’ve released that I’ve been proud to release,” he admits. “I also feel way more connected to these songs than anything else I’ve ever made. It’s the most important project I’ve ever done.”

One huge reason for that, obviously, is that these are the most personal songs Crutchfield has ever written. Between the tender, dreamy wistfulness of “Fine”, the searing, scorching bruised pain and quasi-grunge strains of “Hate To Hurt”, and the graceful, anthemic power of “Blood Of Jesus”, *It Never Gets Easy* is a cornucopia of raw emotion from start to finish, a profound exploration of self that sees Crutchfield really examine, confront and come to terms with who he is. And while he admits that many of its songs were inspired by a painful break-up, they all transcend that relationship to ask harder, more probing questions about love and life in general. “Never Age”, in particular, is a driving, energetic powerhouse of a song which Crutchfield contains his favorite lyrics on the record, and which sees the singer confront past actions he now, as an older, more mature human, regrets.
“That song is about seeing your parents and your family grow older,” he explains. “Sometimes, when you’re growing up, you don’t realize your parents are getting older, too. You think your parents are invincible when you’re a kid and you feel guilt about how you were an asshole when you were a teenager, which I definitely was. It’s sad to see your family get sick and die.”

That, in a nutshell, is what this album is about – that none of that stuff gets any easier even though it happens more and more to all of us as we get older. Yet while it may never get easier, there are ways to cope – something Crutchfield learned through the writing of these songs, especially because they afforded him a catharsis that songwriting had never really given him before.
“Writing about that stuff helped me get through it, for sure,” he says. “A lot of emotion went into writing these songs, and that actually helped me write them at the same time. It also actually helps me when I’m performing them.”

You can hear that emotional release throughout this record, but perhaps nowhere more than on the epic closer “Waves”. A, well, wave of atmospheric emotion, it builds – gradually – into a dramatic swell of feeling inspired by all the emotions and events that inspired the songs before it, both in terms of the record and the band itself.
““Waves” was the first song we wrote,” says Crutchfield. “We did music in 2016,but I wrote the lyrics for it last year. They contain the album title, but also sum up what pretty much all of the songs are about – and who we’ve become as a band. We’ve been a band for four years, but I feel like this is a rebirth. Prior to this record, we were just trying to figure out what we wanted to sound like and who we were.”

It only takes one listen to *It Never Gets Easy* to hear that Eastwood have most definitely worked all of that out.