Written by Jeff Ignatius
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As you might imagine, there are a good many Christopher Wrights in the world, and one of them was a conspirator with Guy Fawkes in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. But according to singer, songwriter, and guitarist Jon Sunde, his band The Daredevil Christopher Wright takes its name from a person he made up for a song.

"As far as we're concerned, he's a fictional character," Sunde said in a phone interview. "But it's interesting to hear about the Christopher Wrights of the world." (What's dryly funny is that the song bearing his name has the chorus "I want to grow up to be Christopher Wright.")

The use of such a common name with the vivid "daredevil" mimics the approach of the Eau Claire, Wisconsin, trio, headlining a Daytrotter.com show on Wednesday at Huckleberry's in Rock Island.

Sunde called it "pairing the profound and the mundane," and that means searching for enlightenment in the everyday. "Trying to shoot straight at love or straight at agony or trying to expound on the concept of romance - it's too big, it's too broad, it's too strange," Sunde said.

It also means matching serious subject matter with music that is both joyous and adventurous - what he called "jaunty."

"I find I'm drawn to juxtaposing more somber or heavy topics with music that is not so heavy," he said. "When it's done right ... it speaks to the depth of those experiences."

If you listen to "A Conversation About Cancer" without paying attention to the words, you could never guess it was about disease. Until noise-rock anxiety is introduced two-thirds the way through, it is buoyant, cheery, and muscular, and it closes triumphantly.

Yet it *is* about cancer - "Father loves her/ and that's stronger than cancer / And she's teaching me / She's teaching me / She's teaching me" - and it magically manages to be respectful and truthful without being at all grim. That's because its *real* subject is the comfort of genuine faith. The song's source was an e-mail to Sunde from his mother following a visit to a friend with cancer.

The song appears on the band's debut full-length, *In Deference to a Broken Back*. Two years passed from the beginning of the recording process to its May 19 release; Sunde said that "the only people who are really waiting for this record are our friends and family. ... We made the decision early on that we just want to take as much time ... as it needs."

But a funny thing happened. Eau Claire's Justin Vernon became an indie-music and media darling in 2008 with Bon Iver's *For Emma, Forever Ago*. "To see someone you know and have known for a while find success - and for him, it's an honest success - ... it gave this sense of possibility," Sunde said. "It felt like, 'This can actually happen. There are models for this.'"

The band's regional touring began to pay off in late 2008, and "doors started opening a lot," Sunde said. And with Vernon mixing *Broken Back*, the wholly unanticipated album was generating a lot of attention - with the band named *Paste* magazine's final Band of the Week for May .

With the band on the cusp of breaking nationally, I asked Sunde whether his mother would get royalties from "A Conversation About Cancer."

"She probably should, for that and for everything else they've done for us," he said. "We'll have to work that out once we start getting any kind of money at all."

The guitar blasts of that song are unusual, though. The band - also featuring Sunde's brother Jason and drummer Jesse Edgington - more commonly mixes delicate chamber pop (not unlike the Decemberists) with earnest, introspective folk akin to Sufjan Stevens.

Sunde said that Stevens and Danielson have been models, particularly with the way they integrate religion into idiosyncratic musical visions. *Broken Back* is filled with religious themes and imagery, and he said that "it's hard for me to write anything that is without some kind of spiritual component."

The Daredevil Christopher Wright clearly finds hope in unexpected places. One couplet is a lovely encapsulation: "If we were in outer space / Would our problems still have the same weight?"

But Sunde isn't pollyannish. There's defeated recognition in "Stewardess" that speaks to the groundedness of the group's songs: "Let's face the facts / I'm not as clever, as funny / To anybody but you." That human perceptiveness really distinguishes The Daredevil Christopher Wright.

The Daredevil Christopher Wright will perform on Wednesday, June 3, at Hucklberry's (223 18th Street in Rock Island). The bill also includes Caroline Smith & the Good Night Sleeps and Michael Morris. The all-ages show starts at 7 p.m., and admission is $6.

For more information on The Daredevil Christopher Wright, visit MySpace.com/thedaredevilchristopherwright . To hear the band's Daytrotter session, click here .