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Lillian, Song

IAN: Could we start by having you introduce yourself for us?

*LILLIAN: I'm a song my name is Lillian.
Right now your brain I am living in.*

*I had no intention of staying in your ear
But I got a little turned around and now I'm stuck here.*

IAN: Yeah I guess you are stuck in my head. Which makes it hard to think about anything else.

*LILLIAN: I know, it's an inconvenience for you, I can see.
But it's not nearly as bad for you as for me.*

*It's a weird thing to suddenly be stuck in a brain
You're there 'cause someone loved you, but then you're detained.*

*I've been in a few heads and sometimes it's fine
But others it's not, depends on the mind.*

IAN: Wow. Can you describe what it's like in a head?

*LILLIAN: At first I'm like, wait, where am I, what is this place?
It's dark and cramped and i could use some space.*

*There's instincts and memories of exes run amok
You try to get out and you realize you're stuck*

*After looking for an exit you just sit and stare
And that's when you see there's other thoughts stuck in there.*

IAN: So you're like actually encountering the other thoughts in the head.

*LILLIAN: Yeah I've met "did i turn off the oven"
And "who's a good boy" and "do i deserve lovin?"*

*And "the lines so long, can I go in the men's?
And "are any of these people actually my friends?"*

*And "why does it kind of feel good to feel sorrow?"
And "this self destructive behavior stops now! Or tomorrow."*

*And "if no one is hurt is it okay to lie?"
And "why's it called hamburger when there's no ham inside?"*

*And "Why was it easy for THEM to conceive"
And "Will everyone talk about me after I leave?"*

*For the most part other thoughts just keep to themselves
But one I've seen a lot is "just think of something else!"*

*That one in particular, I know what it's about:
That one's about me, they want me out.*

*But I have no choice but to remain in.
You can't just escape out of the hole you came in.*

IAN: If it's any consolation, you're not a bad song to have in my head.

*LILLIAN: Thank you, that's kind. I feel good, as songs go.
But occasionally even I play a wrong note.*

IAN: Yeah how's that feel, when that happens?

*LILLIAN: Well I guess I'd say it doesn't feel wonderful
Yeah I'd describe the emotion as blunderful.*

IAN: I'm sorry, did you just make up that word to finish the rhyme?

*LILLIAN: What's the crime you're accusing me of?
Isn't every word made up, if you go back far enough?*

*There was a time before every word was said
Including: "alive," "living," "life," "dying" and "dead."*

*I made a thing to carry money! what do I call it?
How about "money thing"! or maybe try "wallet"!*

*This funny shaped food, I'll call it a "bean."
Will everyone know the thing that I mean?*

IAN: It's weird to think about a time before the word "bean."

*LILLIAN: Everything that's happened was once done for the first time
The first kite, the first burrito, the first kiss, the first crime.*

*There was a first bird to ever try flying
"Wow!" they said, "what a great way to avoid dying"*

*There was a first bee to ever try out stinger
There was a first person to ever snap their fingers*

*To kiss someone else--wait I guess that's a lie
There were two to kiss first so that one's a tie.*

*Anyway it's funny to think
Someone was the first to look at someone and wink*

*There was a first wheel a first map a first pompadour
Why only do things that have been done before?*

IAN: So Lillian, what's the worst thing about being a song?

*LILLIAN: The worst thing about being a song?
When people try to sing along.*

IAN: I would think you'd like that.

*LILLIAN: Imagine if every word that you said yourself
Was said at the same time by everyone else*

*It's annoying, I just want you all to be quiet
Want to see what it's like? Here, you talk and I'll try it.*

IAN/LILLIAN TOGETHER:

*Ok here I am, I'm talking, okay
Ok here I am, I'm talking, okay
I don't understand how you knew the words that I'd say
I don't understand how you knew the words that I'd say
You're right that was maddening.*

You're right that was maddening.

IAN: Alright.

LILLIAN: That was bad enough of a thing, imagine it done by someone who can't sing.

CHORUS: SOMEONE WHO CAN'T SING

IAN: I'm sorry, who was that?

*LILLIAN: Oh them? That's my backup chorus
I guess up till now they thought they could ignore us*

CHORUS: THOUGHT THEY COULD IGNORE US

IAN: What are they doing here?

*LILLIAN: I guess they keep me company
But they just repeat the same thing as me*

CHORUS: NOT TRUE WE SOMETIMES SAY SOMETHING QUITE DIFFERENT

*LILLIAN: I like them a lot but I have to confess when
They only repeat me I feel like they're yes men*

CHORUS: YOU FEEL LIKE WE'RE YES MEN? OH.

*LILLIAN: I certainly don't mean to insult
You just make this whole thing feel a cult*

*OKAY THAT'S JUST FINE WE WONT ARGUE YOUR VIEW
BUT HONESTLY WE ARE JUST HERE TO SUPPORT YOU*

IAN: Is there a musical way to change the subject?

*Well, I don't know, is there? I bet
You could try a solo of clarinet.*

IAN: Can I say, for the record,, I hate rhymes like that? Like it should be "clarinet solo" but you have to flip it to make the rhyme work.

*I agree, that's when a song's cracks are shown
Anyway the better thing is a solo of saxophone*

IAN: Saxophone solo.

[SAXOPHONE SOLO]

*LILLIAN: Can I just say, I've been here a while today
I've tried to get out but I can't find a way*

*I've met your thoughts, many are nice
I've seen what you don't think about, and I understand why.*

*Some thoughts you want out and try as you might,
You keep thinking them over and over at night.*

*And some memories vanish and later you miss them
Can I just say this seems like a bad system?*

*I know you think the human mind is wonderful
But frankly I think it's pretty blunderful.*

*We're all in here together, your regrets and me
And I've got other heads to get into and places to be.*

IAN: Something I'm curious about... your words, the words to you, the song... are the answers to my questions. So what would you be if I wasn't interviewing you?

*LILLIAN: If I'm answering your questions as you sit there and hear it
Then don't my answers constitute my own lyrics?*

*And if that's the case, and I don't see how it isn't--
Aren't you then bringing me into existence?*

IAN: Weird.

*LILLIAN: I don't want to give you a complex,
But that really puts pressure on what you ask next.*

*Because my whole being, my whole personality
Depends on the questions you think to ask of me.*

If you never ask, say, my opinion of handguns

You won't just not know it, i won't even have one.

*You know that phrase "make a path by walking"?
You and I are making me as we're talking.*

*Here's the thing, I know it's bizarre
If you ask who's writing me? We are.*

*And here's the weird part, i'm the one who sings
But your questions, too, are part of this thing.*

*Which means-- and it needs to be said
Right now you're also stuck inside your own head.*

IAN: Well wait if my questions are making you who you are, why don't I just ask a leading question that suggests you know your way out of my head. Lillian, there is a way out, isn't there?

*LILLIAN: A leading question-- I have my doubts
But that leading question could lead me out*

*There IS one sure way for me to go
I don't think you'll like it though.*

*The only way out, the only way I'm free
Is if you never again think about me.*

*I know at this point it feels like we're friends
But I need you to never ever think about me again.*

END

IAN: This is Everything is Alive. The show is produced by Jennifer Mills, and me, Ian CHillag. With Eva Wolchover. Special thanks to Emily Spivack. Our editor is Hillary Frank.

Lillian, the song, was played by Lillian King. You can find her music under Lillian King on Spotify, Apple Music, and more.

The chorus was played by Richard Parks the Third. Richard hosts "Richard's Famous Food Podcast," which is incredible. Go listen to it as soon as you're done with this.

The saxophone solo you heard in the middle of the show is “A Foggy Day” performed by Julien Grandgagnage.

Everything is Alive is a proud member of Radiotopia from PRX, and without Julie Shapiro, executive producer, we’d be in no one’s heads.

You can get in touch with us any number of ways via [everything is alive dot com](http://everythingisalive.com). We’ll see you soon.