Q&A

KALEY CUOCO-SWEETING

SCROLLING THROUGH her Twitter feed earlier this year, Kaley Cuoco-Sweeting stumbled upon pictures of the Canadian seal hunt—the world’s largest mass slaughter of marine mammals.

“I openly admit I had no idea this was even going on,” says the star of CBS’s The Big Bang Theory. So she spent the day researching, trying to learn more and more. She sent out tweets of her own, sharing a petition, conveying her disgust. “I went crazy,” she says.

“I felt like, at that moment, this was my cause right now. I had to say something; I had to stand up for this.”

Since then, Cuoco-Sweeting has held a charity spinning event and started a fundraising page through The HSUS’s myHumane platform, raising money and awareness for the Protect Seals Campaign. She spoke with All Animals for this edited interview.

You’ve said you want to accompany The HSUS to the Canadian ice floes, where the Protect Seals team documents the hunt each year. What compelled that desire?

I think as a—I hate even using this—as a “celebrity,” people think we say a few things, and then that’s it, and we put it to bed. I need to show my fans, and people that agree with me and disagree with me, that I’m willing to go out there. I want to see it face to face. I’m not just saying that I believe in this campaign, and I want the hunt to end, and blah, blah, blah. I want to go there, so I can show them, “No, I was there. These are my own pictures. This is what happened, this is what I saw and this is what I believe in.”

How did you get started in animal advocacy work?

I’ve always loved animals. As a kid we had dogs. But my passion got very strong maybe eight years ago when I rescued my first dog [a pit bull named Norman].

I went to a rescue. And he walked in, and he jumped up on me and almost pushed me over. It was love at first sight. I don’t know what happened that day, but I became this pit bull lover. Now we actually have three, and I love them more than life itself. I think they’re absolutely amazing, and I want to promote rescue as much as possible. I walk into these shelters, and there’s thousands and thousands—and most of them are pit bulls that need rescue. It’s just become a big passion of mine, and it will be for the rest of my life.

Do animal issues ever get discussed on set?

Everyone that I work with knows how I feel about animals. Even this day that I was obsessed with the seal hunt, I was literally in the corner at work, and they’re like, “What’s going on?” I’m like, “seal hunt.” I was obsessed. And we’ve got a ton of animal lovers at work, but I think the biggest conversations and wars I have seem to be on Twitter, so bring it at me.

WATCH Cuoco-Sweeting’s appeal for seals at myHumane.org/kaley.

IN WE ANIMALS, Jo-Anne McArthur immerses readers in her world—that of a photojournalist documenting the often-times disturbing, sometimes heart-warming ways that human and animal lives intersect. In one photograph, at a Vietnamese dog meat market, a young girl offers a smile and a terrified puppy to the camera. In another, a caretaker gently cradles a young gorilla rescued from the bushmeat trade in Cameroon. At a dog-racing track in Australia, a child reaches over a fence to stroke a muzzled greyhound.

McArthur reflects: “We like to keep our relationship with animals on a short leash: we can touch, but only for a moment; we can bond, but only so much.” With more than 100 compelling images and thoughtful commentary, We Animals invites readers to examine humans’ complex, often contradictory attitudes toward other species.

WITH STUNNING FOOTAGE of wild horses in their Western ranges, American Mustang showcases the beauty and spirit of a national icon. But the film doesn’t shy away from revealing some hard truths as well. Filmmakers point the lens at the Bureau of Land Management—the government agency that manages wild horses and burros by rounding them up and often placing them in bleak, overcrowded holding facilities. Part documentary, part character-driven narrative, American Mustang manages to entertain viewers while sending a clear message that our nation’s wild horses need help.

ON THE iPAD: Watch the film trailer. Visit americannmustangthemovie.com to learn more.