

The day news broke about Antiflag's disbandment, I was on vacation with my family in a remote area with scarce phone service. I was a top tier member of the Pateron community, so I was one of the first to see the announcement with its lack of details and I knew, immediately, something really serious must have happened. By the time I was in an area with better service, it'd be fair to say I was a wreck. The pit in my stomach was persistent while I scoured Facebook for answers, and it wasn't long before I saw comments alluding to the podcast detailing the reasons behind it. I read an account of what happened first, then I made myself listen because, though I was terrified to do so, I knew it was important. I also knew, after hearing Kristina's story, it was credible.

In the weeks that followed I saw other survivors sharing details of their stories on various social media outlets. I grieved for them. I grieved within our community of Patreon supporters, which was thankfully salvaged after our discord server was erased without warning by a quick-thinking member. We shared what it felt like, we had tough discussions, we disagreed and lamented, and we held ourselves together. The affect upon us is not comparable to what survivors have gone through, but nonetheless, we had a great loss and betrayal to reckon with.

What I'd like to say about all of this, ultimately, is that even though we were hurt, even though many of us considered this monster a hero in our lives, we stayed true to the words of those songs he clearly didn't believe in their entirety. We believed Kristina, and when the Rolling Stone article came out, we believed those women, too. I know there are likely more heartbreaking stories to come. I'm not sure what the future will hold. I'm not sure how I feel about some of the actions taken by the band and the crew in real time. I'm not sure how I will feel about all of this when I can look at it with a heart that doesn't feel quite so cracked.

All I can say is that I've learned something important. Sometimes, in our love for a band, for the dazzle of a good show, or the buzz of a message that resonates, we misplace our admiration. I idolized the band, particularly the abuser hidden behind a false mask of feminist support. I will never look up to a musician in quite the same way again. At first, this felt like a loss. With time, however, I've come to realize it's a gift. I will no longer be in a position where I'm placing a man I don't really know on a pedestal because of who he publicly seems to be. I will, instead, fight for, believe, listen to and find hope in the people in our scene, including the women who were brave enough to speak out when they knew what all of that would publicly entail. I'm grateful to you, I'm grateful for the response of our Patreon community. I'm grateful for the punks who believe in and live out the ideals that they profess.

There are some wounds that never fully heal, but it is better to carry them on shared shoulders. I'm eternally honored to be a part of a community that is doing what it can to make this scene better and safer for everyone in the future.

- Andrea