

11.22.23

Today, in the final hours of the open window for the Adult Survivors Act in New York, I filed a lawsuit against Justin “Sane” Geever, the singer who raped me, and his enablers. I recognize my privileged position to seek accountability while so many of his other victims cannot. I recognize the shame, the fear, and the legal restrictions that so often prevent survivors from seeking justice, and I choose to stand up for all of us.

Since I first came forward about my assault this July, I have been contacted by an overwhelming number of women who were also assaulted and irreparably harmed by Justin Geever throughout his 34-year career as a touring musician. I have held these stories close, provided free therapy, coordinated support groups, and relived the traumas of so many women who, like me, were once young fans of Anti-Flag, a “feminist” political punk band we trusted and admired. Most of these women revealed to me how Justin violated their bodies, broke their spirits, and left them feeling ashamed, confused and betrayed. And for most of these women, the fear around speaking out publicly or being blamed for Justin’s crimes has caused them to suffer in silence, as I did for 13 years.

When I first shared my story on the *enough.* podcast this summer, I did so for my own personal healing. I had no intention of naming Justin or pursuing a lawsuit. However, within hours it became clear that I was not his only victim. The scores of messages I have received from around the world since then, including accounts of abuse and assault from at least 60 women—most of whom reportedly were children and teens when they encountered Geever, who is now 50 years old—made it impossible for me to stay silent. In the last five months I have learned the levels of his depravity and witnessed the inaction of those around him who could have and should have intervened to protect us. Justin Geever used his platform as a celebrated, self-proclaimed “punk rockstar” to groom and lure vulnerable girls into feeling safe in his presence. While he sang about protecting women and standing up to abusers, it appears he was hiding an addiction to power and control, harming countless women who have been unable to speak up before now. Today I hope to encourage his survivors, and survivors of other predators in the music industry, to feel hope again. What sexual predators take from us cannot be restored, but we are no longer the silent victims they want us to be.

I filed my case today for my younger self who didn’t know where to turn, for my sister-survivors who are unable to file themselves, and for my nieces and nephew and the next generation of music lovers who deserve to be protected by both the community and the law.

- Kristina Sarhadi