

I met Danny in NYC when I was still in college. I hadn't been a fan of his, but he was interesting and we started what I thought was a friendship and mentorship. He had weird quirks, including a "dead" doll collection and a tendency toward the morbid, but he encouraged me to speak and listened to what I had to say. He introduced me to actors, artists, musicians. It was an experience for a 21-year-old who loved movies and music and wanted to work in film.

I decided to move to L.A. in the late 90s. Danny invited me to stay with him while I got settled. LA is a strange and beautiful and overwhelming place. It doesn't stop. If you haven't lived and worked in LA, it's impossible to understand and not at all what it looks like from the outside. ("Once Upon a Time in Hollywood" and anything Joan Didion get as close as I've ever seen to nailing the eerie implacability of the place.) Having Danny's help and support in this move meant a good deal to me.

I started working. Unsurprising disclosure: Working as a woman in LA is tough. Yes, I had anything and everything said to me in professional settings. *Alright, whatever*, you tell yourself. *Boys are gross, throw rocks at them*, women joke. We stay calm and move on, and we hardly ever throw those rocks.

For my part, I tend not to flinch when men catcall or tell me to smile. In LA, I didn't react when myriad men said incredibly misogynistic things to me at work. As a friend put it a few months ago upon seeing me in a Jackass t-shirt, "She is Gen X, after all."-I cringe a little at the term "rape culture," though I believe it to be true in its analysis, and I didn't wear a pink hat to the Women's March. I'm the woman who has learned to hang with the guys to try to feel safe and because, yes, she's internalized a lot of misogyny.

When #metoo gained momentum, I did think of Danny often. I always assumed something would come up. I didn't say anything, and I very well may have never said anything. Who would want to go through the shame and blaming? It's so easy to neutralize women, isn't it. "She's crazy." "She's jealous." "She wants money." At that point, you're done. People stop listening.

But when I read what Nomi Abadi had been through *and* what Danny's response was, I had to say something. What I saw in his response was a powerful man taking advantage of his status, as well as the reach and power of his voice, to destroy a woman professionally and personally. A woman working in the same industry in which he works, it should be said. All the usual misogynistic tropes came out in his statement: she was that jealous, thirsty, hysterical woman going after his money.

And yet, what she was saying about him was exactly the man I had known. Everything she said rang true. Her experiences with Danny mirrored so much of what I had experienced with him. I couldn't leave her on her own.

What happened with me? He would take his clothes off. All the time. He would pressure me to do the same. And as I found out years later, he would masturbate while watching me sleep without my ever being aware of it.

Would the 47-year-old me tell the 21-year-old me that she shouldn't trust a man the way I trusted Danny? Of course. Was the 21-year-old me incredibly naïve? Yes, full stop.

But he did know better. He knew exactly what he was doing. He used me carefully and precisely to satisfy a kink for years without my knowledge or consent.

In fact, his kink *required* that I not consent. I had to be asleep, I had to be inanimate. I was of a piece with those dead dolls in that creepy collection.

What has made it all the more difficult to process is how carefully it was done. I went for years thinking I was safe with him. I stayed with him dozens of times thinking that we were friends and that I could sleep next to him in peace. There was nothing romantic in our day-to-day interactions. He never flirted or complimented my looks. He complimented my aptitude, my taste, my abilities.

One day, he just casually told me what he had been doing all along. It was like he was letting me in on a really clever, little joke. I wondered often afterwards why he would admit so blithely to what he had done. I still don't know. I imagine it made him feel even more powerful to boast about it, watch and wait for my reaction and, at the same time, shame me. I imagine it made him feel in control. Likely, it added to the kink for him. Whatever the case was, the man I thought was my friend and mentor had been using me for years. I thought I had been a person to him; instead, I was pure "object."

I know, it's all painful and weird and awful. I feel bad for most everyone involved. No one wants a mess like this. There was no way, however, that I could leave Nomi out there alone, nor could I risk the pattern repeating with another young woman. And I have no problem admitting that I should have said something sooner.

I've seen a lot of reactions in the last few weeks. Yes, I've seen the crazies. Pro tip, gentlemen: Starting a tirade against women or feminism with "that bitch" really undercuts your argument. PS— you don't get to question someone's motives in staying anonymous while calling them a greedy whore-bitch and saying you hope the worst crap in the world happens to them.

You are the very reason anonymity laws exist. Congrats.

I did have a particular, unexpected twinge in seeing the reaction of those who love Danny's music and are disappointed in someone they adore. Music has a special, very personal power; music in film, maybe doubly so. My desert island request would definitely be to have the opening jogging scene in "Birth" playing on loop on a large screen with an excellent sound system for eternity. I get it. Resonant visuals plus music is total magic.

I get, too, what it means to have your trust in someone collapse. It's hard to see the cracks forming on an idol. If someone came forward tomorrow and said one of my musical heroes had done awful things, I would feel hurt and confused, too.

But I don't want you to despair. There is more music, there are still beautiful things. You've got this.

Thanks to everyone who listens. I have been especially heartened by the many people, including young men, who have spoken out clearly as allies. You hear women and trust them. That's a big start, and far more than my generation accomplished.

-Jane Doe XX