

SHINEDOWN

BIO

A door opens. Footsteps lead to a chair inside of a nondescript room. A person sits down and exhales.

As the breath releases, this protagonist experiences a physical, mental, and emotional journey that stretches from life's lowest lows to life's highest highs. Throughout the trip, anxieties dissipate, doubts dissolve, and demons disappear. You might expect everything in between to transpire over the course of some blockbuster Netflix series. However, this story belongs to Shinedown's sixth full-length album, *Attention Attention* [Atlantic Records]. The record-breaking multiplatinum rock band—Brent Smith [vocals], Zach Myers [guitar], Eric Bass [bass, production], and Barry Kerch [drums]—once again uproot convention and deliver a personal, poignant, and powerful body of work that evolves from ruin to reclamation to revelation.

"As we wrote the songs, they showed me that they were all related to each other during a very early stage," Brent explains. "It's one complete thought, because it's a cohesive story. A lot of this is about me, but it's also about Eric, Barry, and Zach. It was born from the last four years of our lives. I've always said, '*You've got to fall in a hole to figure out how to get out of it.*' We start off at the bottom. This person fights to build back up, realizes he or she isn't perfect, accepts that nothing in this world is just handed over, and unlocks the resolve to take everything on. You'll see this shift and change as it progresses down the tracklist. Finally, the character becomes confident again. It's meant to be listened to from beginning to end. We wanted to do something that wasn't traditional."

Leading the charge for 21st century rock by uncompromisingly challenging themselves and occupying the cutting edge, Shinedown engenders diehard love among millions of global fans. The band's unmatched domination of multi-format rock radio commenced with their 2003 platinum-certified debut *Leave A Whisper* and its gold-selling 2005 follow-up *Us and Them*. 2008's *Billboard* Top 10, double-platinum LP *The Sound of Madness* remained on the Top 200 Chart for a staggering 120 consecutive weeks and made rock history with six #1 singles including the gold "Devour," platinum "If You Only Knew," and the triple-platinum breakthrough "Second Chance," igniting a mainstream crossover and soaring to #1 at Hot AC and Top 3 at Top 40.

After contributing the gold-certified "Diamond Eyes" for *The Expendables* film and "Her Name Is Alice" to the album *Almost Alice* inspired by Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, the band seized #1 on the *Billboard* Top Rock Albums Chart and #4 on the Top 200 with 2012's gold-certified *Amaryllis*, which launched three #1 Active Rock anthems — "Bully," "Unity," and "Enemies." 2015's *Threat To Survival* marked their third straight Top 10 debut on the Top 200, arriving at #5 while also debuting at #1 on *Billboard's* Top Rock Albums Chart and bringing Shinedown's total count of number one rock singles to 12 thanks to hits like "Cut the Cord" and "State of My Head." Every one of the singles released over Shinedown's nearly two-decade career has ascended to the Top 10 – a feat unmatched by any other rock band, now or ever before. Beyond sold out headline gigs worldwide and numerous festival headlining sets, Shinedown has sold more than 10 million albums worldwide, has 11 platinum and gold singles and four platinum and gold albums, and averages more than 3.3 million monthly listeners on Spotify as one of the most-listened-to rock bands on the platform with over 600 million streams, contributing to their more than 1 billion total overall streams to date.

While on the road for *Threat To Survival*, Brent found himself mired in darkness. Never one to pull any punches, this period provided a bedrock of inspiration for the writing process.

"In order to make something truly and purely Shinedown, we had to talk about what we know, which is each other," he admits. "I've had to battle certain situations, when it comes to substance abuse and addiction. That reared its ugly head. I basically had fallen from grace, because I'm not perfect. I had to pull myself together and build myself back up. I wouldn't have been able to do that if it wasn't for these three other gentlemen. So, I wrote

about it all. This is probably the most truthful thing I've done in the last decade. I have a tattoo on the top of my left hand that says, *'Your pain is a gift.'* That's how I feel. It's what made me who I am."

"From a lyrical standpoint, I knew what the story was," says Eric. "Brent was so open and honest. I grew up listening to a lot of Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals, and I love that cinematic element. Brent's lyrics give you visuals, but the music can do that. That was the basis for this."

Given the deeply personal nature of the record, the musicians went in-house for production, enlisting Eric to produce and mix an entire album's worth of material for the very first time. Working at his Ocean Industries Studios in Charleston, SC, they devoted the bulk of 2017 to recording what would become *Attention Attention*. Throughout that time, Eric expanded the sonic palette dramatically, bringing cinematic heft to the core.

"We knew that we probably wouldn't be able to get an outsider to come in and make this the way we wanted to," says Brent. "It *had* to be Eric. He did an unbelievable job."

"I didn't want it to feel safe," adds Eric. "I wanted it to feel dangerous and real. My goal is always to try create something that will perk people's ears up when they hear it and naturally draw attention to itself. We had to go digging in the dirt, searching, and finding. From the beginning, I had a scope of what this record could be. Songs can guide you and let you know how they want to sound and what they want to be. I wanted to shake things up as much as possible. I think we achieved that."

The group introduce the record with the opener and first single "Devil." A rush of unpredictable rhythms and robust, roaring, and raw guitars gives way to an ominous, yet overpowering refrain, *"I was sent to warn you the devil's in the next room."*

"It's the beginning of the story, but it's also a way to come back and make sure the rock 'n' roll community understands that we haven't abandoned them by any stretch of the imagination," the frontman grins. "It's a very universal song, because of its intensity. It's all about being terrified and afraid. You have to accept the fact you can't pretend you're not scared. The only way to get stronger is to respect that certain situations are terrifying. The devil might be you. You need to learn how to readjust and get out of your own way."

On "Kill Your Conscience," airy synths and the crack of a whip snap into a percussive march and snarling refrain instigated by the pitfalls of social media. Elsewhere during "Get Up," lush piano chords underscore a lyrical ode to Eric and his struggles with depression as Brent assures, *"Take it from me, you're not the only one—who can't see straight. If you are ever in doubt, don't sell yourself short, you might be bulletproof. Hard to move mountains when you're paralyzed, but you gotta try."*

The track "Human Radio" culminates on a choir comprised of the producer's sisters and mom. It reaches heavenly heights on the back of energized distortion tailor-made for sports stadiums.

"The world is calling to the person in the room as a reminder that there are other people outside fighting for survival, truth, and just to stay alive," he goes on. "The human radio is your heartbeat. It's an undivided song and a symbol of the human spirit."

For the vocalist, it hints at a larger message and optimistic social implications. Brent elaborates, "This whole record lets the public know we have each other. We may not always agree, but we've got to respect each other."

"Brilliant" closes out *Attention Attention* with a gallop of guitars, screeching leads, and an intense vocal crescendo. It concludes on an inspiring proclamation, *"It's my day to be brilliant!"*

"That song holds a lot of weight with me," he states. "It's designed to hit you like a flood of emotion. In the story, the person stands up. It's time to get moving. That means literally run for your life. It's the moment the individual becomes fearless."

Shinedown too remains as fearless as ever as they kick off what promises to be their biggest and boldest chapter yet. Ultimately, the band delivers an engaging, powerful and enduring statement on *Attention Attention*.

“I want this to feel like a journey,” concludes Eric. “I hope it catches listeners’ attention. Throughout the process of listening to it, the hair on their arms stands up and they become invested in this creation. That’s what I would love for people to take away.”

“I want everyone to know we will always go to the next level,” Brent leaves off. “There’s no ceiling. We’ll continue to push ourselves not only as musicians, but as songwriters and as people. I feel like this is a record the world needs right now. It’s about celebrating the will we all have inside of us. To me, this band means giving up is not an option. That’s why we never say ‘Goodbye’; we say, ‘Until next time.’”

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