



Story Told By the One Who Caused Harrm-Marti's Story

Two years ago I moved back from living in Berlin I had been quite active within queer communities over there, and, um, had transitioned over there, and then I came back and I really wanted to get involved in a different community here, and... but then I went to a, a party and it was a fundraiser for something.

And um, I got quite drunk. At the party I grabbed, grabbed somebody from behind, and um, when that incident happened, I backed off and was like, oh--because the, the woman turned around and was like, "What are you doing?" clearly, and I was like, "Oh shit, I thought you were somebody else."

Then, a week later I was at another party and I was approached by...I was told to leave the party because I, they had identified me as being this person who'd, um, grabbed this, um, woman. And um, they were saying that they were acting on behalf of a community-based, group that responds to violence without using police. Um, you know I'd been to a fundraiser for them and, you know, I was aware of them. And so when they said that they were acting on behalf of this organization, um, I was more than willing to, sort of respond in the way that they wanted and to go through the processes with them of, you know--because I believe in what they were doing.

You know I was just like, "I'm up for doing whatever you want me to do," and, you know, like. They wanted to have a meeting and that the person that I'd grabbed would come, and I was like "Cool". And I got there and the person that I had grabbed wasn't at the meeting. And it was these two girls and--women, and um, pretty much I sat down and they kind of just uh, told me how...like told me that I had done this terrible thing and that um I needed to own that behavior and that I needed to address drinking and I was like, "Okay," like "That's cool," like yeah. I--you know? They wanted to just tell me about the hurt that I'd done to this person and like that was totally fine and I was like, "You know, it's good for me to hear that one of the things that they have as a part of their process was to have me have a support person. And um, the support person *they* wanted to be somebody which they knew.

They ended up getting this other friend of mine to be a support person and this friend of mine she's quite a passive woman and she's quite sympathetic to what they do like I kind of was alone in that meeting, but it was phrased in a way that I had a support person, but that wasn't, that was not a support person for me, that was a support person that *they* could have lots of contact with, because they didn't want to speak directly to me.

So, I remember asking...well, they said that they hadn't--they said, "Oh we haven't even spoken to the survivor, because she's too upset about what's happened." So they hadn't even spoken to her. So well then, um, nothing, they didn't sort of clarify anything in that meeting about what was going to happen, but over the next few weeks they evicted me from spaces and stuff. You know like, twice a week an incident would happen and I'd be like, "what's going on? Like I can't, I can't have this contact, like I can't do this, like what's going to happen with it?" And it kind of just like kept on going and it wasn't changing and I was like I couldn't really deal--like I couldn't do anything with it, it was just this ongoing thing and like it just kind of kept going on.

I didn't know what to do anymore; but then they--my girlfriend, she hadn't had a house for ages, she'd been homeless. And, then she finally got a house and they- the two people acting on





behalf of this organization called me and I was at work, Melbourne and they were like, "Oh, you know, um Crystal can't move in to that, to that house." so then I was like, what the hell is going on? Like I'm... this has nothing to do with my girlfriend and the girl that I, um, grabbed didn't even live at the house. She was a friend of someone--like it, it just didn't make any sense. so have to like then call Crystal and be like, I'm being told that you can't move into this house, like, was awful.

So then I called another meeting with them. I was like, "This has to stop, you know like, we need to have a meeting." Um, but like, and I also was like, "I'm not doing what you, I'm not going to do it anymore. I don't--it's not going to work like that."

And so, um, from then on, like they kind of you know they've gone and told everyone in Melbourne and that's gone on to Sydney, my name, who I am, what I look like, and what I did. And that I'm this thing, this person that has-that is a perpetrator. And you know, a sexual perpetrator, and....

And so now when I go out, like I you know, like people, I've had people like violently come up to me and come up to my friends in aggressive ways and um so all of the formal kind of stuff, the meetings, that all happened within the space of four weeks, five weeks at the very beginning. And it's just, and you know, that was a year and half ago now. And it's been a year and a half of just like I don't know. It's just been ongoing, the, it just hasn't changed. And the, you know, I'm not living here because of an incident in my share house that I was living in for two years and it still, it still happens to me, like last week.

So how was I supposed to continue doing anything with them if nothing that I said or did made any difference? And, and so like, so I would have wanted for them to have provided a space for me to be able to talk about what's going on for me. I would have liked to have known how much communication was happening with the survivor and where she was at with it and how she was. Or, not that I need to know necessarily, but...

Um, so I think one of the key things that I kind of felt and feel is that if people are going to, um engage in doing this, um community-based responses to violence that the people that are doing it really need to be quite, um...not necessarily educated in a--going to university and getting educated, but people really need to be self-taught or um [pause] engaging with what they're doing outside of their context of, you know? So like if, if people are just doing community-based stuff within their own community and it stays within that circle then it's like, well actually there's a whole discourse about how you do this stuff and how you negotiate with people and how you facilitate meetings and how you communicate with people and you know, what a support role is and what a mediator is and...

I don't really know, I don't have the solutions for how to deal with me and her being in the same space and keeping us away and stuff, but I guess, um [pause] that the intervals of communication about it need to be kind of set up a bit predetermined that, so that then there's--even if nothing ev--even if an event doesn't happen there's still like a check in about how the parties are going and so it's an ongoing kind of process that, that yeah.

And like so I don't know, yeah. I would think that it would be possible to negotiate, I think maybe at the beginning like you know if, depending on the incident and all or whatever that the, the like





that needs, that sets up how you deal with the beginning. Because if it's you know, if it's really traumatic for people, so then, it's like OK, well you know, they could have--it could have been like "Marti probably, for the next month, like, please don't go here for the next month. Give us a month and then by that time we'll have spoken to her and then after that then we'll speak to you," you know. And then, so it's just like, "Hey, I get it. For the month I understand I'm not going anywhere for a month." Or, you know? But instead it was like, this ongoing like, "Don't go here, don't go there." You know? But if it's set up before or something that then unless--I'm not going to go crazy and get frustrated and angry and not know what to do. And so, you know, that's not to say that, you know then they say, OK, in a month and then you, they--that' there's no communication in between, but it means that at least there's some idea about what the hell is going on.

