

After nearly a year on the road I came back to California to wrap up the tour in my home state just as massive wildfires erupted in several areas, causing widespread devastation. I wrote the following statement to read at the final concerts.

*There is no such thing as a slow burn now. Only lightning fast destruction and the residue of floating ash. The haze is real. It is ash-filled smoke, blanketing a good portion of the state of California. This is our Armageddon. And now, on the heels of thousands of firefighters who put their lives on the line, it's we who must be the fire brigade. No one will appear on the clouds of glory to deliver us.*

*We must be the fire brigade.*

*First I want to honor the terrible losses. Lives. People's homes, their dreams. Their trees, gardens, bicycles, toys. Goldfish and pet lizards. All their treasures. And all of the animals, wild and not wild. Birds, insects, and the smallest of living things, all essential to the thriving of the human race. Let's honor all of that.*

*We are the fire brigade.*

*Now is the time to be our brothers' and sisters' keeper. Now is the time to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Now is the time to love.*

*And in spite of the ashes, haze, chaos and sorrow, now is the time to take on the larger forces of darkness.*

*As a Californian I pride myself in being a part of a forward thinking state. Here we understand not only the devastation, but the only cause of the devastation we can do anything about. The truth is, the world is heating up. The lie is that everything will be fine.*

*The only way we can fight a world on fire from this wounded democracy is by creating a mass movement, from the grassroots up. That means walking the talk. That means taking risks. That means finding the right organization to help you resist evil. That means going to your forward thinking legislator and saying "Yes! I'll stand behind that!" and ignoring all the so-called leaders who have betrayed you.*

*That means talking to your kids about truth and lies, and about the Parkland High School Student Movement, and about how they can have a movement, too. That means putting empathy and compassion back into the dialogue and into practice. Gandhi said organized nonviolent action is no more than organized love.*

*So you here tonight, by the grace of God and the accident of your birth, make a promise to yourselves and your families that you will not sit out this firestorm. You will take the leap of faith of your lifetime. And then be true to your promise and to yourself. Do it for the children, so they have a possibility of a good life.*

*We are the fire brigade. Together we can create an unstoppable force for good. We need only begin.*