

Papa Roach is a band whose style has evolved over the years into their own genre of rock and roll. The music is influenced by everything from hip hop to punk to hair metal. So, it's hard to come up with a suitable opening band for them that could get the night going in the right direction without alienating too many people in the crowd. Halestorm is one of the few bands that's popped into my head as a possibility, and lo and behold, that's who was chosen to open for the Papa Roach - Shinedown co-headlining tour that just wrapped up this month.

Lizzy Hale certainly has the looks to put some male butts in the arena seats (think Sandra Bullock meets Lita Ford). But more importantly, she has the pipes to back up the pretty face. Halestorm's music calls for a strong lead with swagger that can handle their style without being completely cheesy, and they've successfully found this in Hale. She commands the stage with authority, and brings the metal by not only belting out metal tunes like "I Get Off" and "It's Not You", but playing guitar as well.

The most memorable moment of Shinedown's set was when they dedicated "Simple Man" to Dimebag Darrell, who had passed away 5 years earlier on the day of that night's Binghamton show. Doing his best to hold back his tears in front of a big crowd, vocalist Brent Smith told a sweet story of Shinedown's first encounter with the man backstage at a festival, and how Dimebag immediately broke the ice and welcomed them into his extended family that day.

Tearing through old and new school hits from "Getting Away With Murder" to "Broken Home" to "Lifeline" to "Scars", Papa Roach's rocking set made braving a looming blizzard worthwhile for the fans. The band's energy always reaches every corner of the arena. Literally, as singer Jacoby Shaddix made his way to the back during "Born With Nothing, Die With Everything", a song off their 2002 album *Lovehatetragedy*, to show the people in the cheap seats some love. If that wasn't enough to energize the crowd, Jacoby commanded the crowd to form the infamous Wall of Death, during "Into the Light", off their latest CD *Metamorphosis*.

Papa Roach is currently on a break, while Shinedown and Halestorm continue to tour through the next few months across the U.S.