



## *A letter to my Husband: A Call to Action from the “Everywoman.”*

### *I’m sorry...*

*This poem is meant to be read, sentence-by-sentence, by different women, to reflect how abuse hurts everyone: it is not specific to ethnicity, age, or color*

I’m sorry that I didn’t love you more, and I am sorry that you didn’t love me. **I’m sorry that it hurt you when I pulled away because of how much you kept hurting me.** I’m sorry that I couldn’t allow myself to be an emotional or physical punching bag anymore. **I’M SORRY THAT I STOPPED LETTING YOU RAPE ME.** I’m sorry that looking out for my best interest, and the best interests of our sons and our daughters, hurt you, because it meant saving me, too. I’m sorry that not being with you means that you have to pay our kids money so that they can be safe while in my care. *I’m sorry that being a healthy role model for them, by working and getting an education, hurts you, because it means that you have to try harder to compete.* **Only, I’m not competing.** I’m only trying to live my own life. I’m trying to get up every-single-day with enthusiasm and hope so that the abuse that happened to me wasn’t all for nothing. **That it didn’t win. That it didn’t stop me.** *That it didn’t take so much of me that my daughters have to go through it, or their daughters, or their daughters.* I’m sorry that I broke the chain because I lived, and that I still live every day better than the last. **No matter what.** Every day is better now because I don’t have to live with you. I’m sorry that I found people who love me and who take care of me. *I’m sorry that they show me that I matter.* **I’m sorry that my happiness makes you unhappy, because it somehow takes away from you.** *I’m sorry that my very existence means that you didn’t win, and that you don’t own me.* **THAT YOU NEVER OWNED ME.** I’m sorry that my life is pointed toward a better future for our kids and for me. I’m sorry that one day I will make a difference big enough to create change for all people. **I’m sorry that I will teach others to rise and be their true, authentic selves.** I’m sorry that my example will show others that their very existence on this earth holds value, because... they matter too. No matter what has happened to them. *No matter who they are.* **No matter what they look like.** No matter their sexual orientation or gender. No matter how they sound, or speak, or what they know, or how they know it, they matter in this world. **Their lives matter. Their very existence matters. They will know they matter because I matter too.** No matter what people say or do. **NO. MATTER. WHAT.** I’m sorry that every time I take a breath, I show people I survived, and every day I live just a little bit longer, I show people they can live too.