

Dear "John,"

You don't know me, but I am a daughter, a mother, a sister, a friend. But to you I was just a body. Why didn't you notice the bruises: Couldn't you see the sadness in my eyes? You had no idea what was waiting for me after you left. Did you really think I liked you? Did you really think I wanted to be with you? I couldn't take enough showers after you left. I couldn't scrub off the disgust. Sometimes I would scrub my body so hard I would start to bleed. Did you think I enjoyed it? You were hurting me! I was scared every time I got into your car or into your room. Most of the abuse came from men like you. I would cry because you were hurting me, but oh well, you paid, so I guess I don't matter. I couldn't wait for it to be over. Sometimes I wondered what your life was like? Do you have kids, do you have a wife, what kind of job do you have? But mostly I wondered what happened to you to make you think this was ok. I wonder if you love yourself. I wonder if you have the same kind of fears that I have. Every time I was with you, the more I slipped away. Slowly the little girl my mom raised was dead. I became a shell, a zombie just going through the motions. Every time you were on me, I would imagine myself at the beach with my kids. I would pretend I was somewhere else with my kids. I hated the way you smell. I hated to feel your sweat on my body. Sometimes I would pray that it would all end and I would be back with my kids. But with every purchase I was told the same thing, that when I had enough money I could leave and go with my kids. It was always one more time. All I ever heard was you still don't have enough money. Tomorrow you can get your kids, but that tomorrow never came. Did you know that is what I had dangling over me, my kids? Did you know I wasn't allowed to eat until I gave all my money to him? Did you know I would pass out because I was so hungry? I wished I was with my kids again. What about you? What do you wish for?

I wish you knew how I got here. I wish you knew I lost my innocence at 4 years old. I wish you knew I just left an abusive relationship. I wish you knew how scared I was. I wish you knew that just because I was there, it didn't mean I wanted to be. I wish you knew what it was like to be homeless as a young woman. I wish you knew what it was like to eat from a trash can because you were starving and about to pass out because you're hypoglycemic. I wish you knew that about 3 a.m. it gets so cold outside it felt like my feet were going to freeze. I wish you knew I wanted help. I wish you knew I just wanted my kids back. I wish you knew what it felt like to be drugged and brutally raped because I tried to leave. I wish you knew that my body will never be the same again because of all the abuse and all the rapes. I wish you knew how scared I am to go to certain stores because what if I see you. I wish that you knew this isn't a choice. I wish you knew that I am so much more than this. I wish you knew that regardless of all the damage you caused me, you didn't break me!!! I am free!!! In fact, now I want to help men like you turn their lives around just like I did.

I forgive you. I no longer hold on to hatred or revenge. Instead, I want to ask you to search within your soul and see that your actions only hurt everyone involved. This doesn't have to be who you are. This moment in your life doesn't have to define you. You can change and you can stop this cycle. You can make a difference by being a voice to other men. We all need a safe place to heal and I pray that you find that place to heal from whatever you have gone through too. Compassion is what ignites the miraculous.

From, me the one you bought

Corina