

An open letter to my abuser

I am your... Wife. Husband. Partner. Child. Parent...

...and you are my abuser.

You probably don't like being called that. But that's what you are.

There have been times when you said you loved me, and I assume you meant it. You still say it sometimes – but you don't mean it now. It's like when you say you're sorry – you think you are. But you aren't.

Sometimes, you were the one who held me when I was your new-born child, filled with promise; you watched me grow, dependent on you for everything, and then you helped me spread my wings.

Perhaps One special day, you stood alongside me and promised to be my strength, my friend, my lover.

As I grow older I am becoming increasingly dependent on you.

In all these relationships, I have loved you – deep down, there is a part of me that perhaps still does.

But now, instead of loving you, I am frightened of you. As child, as partner, as parent, you are the one in whom I should be able to place my trust. But I can't. You have hurt me too many times.

You wound me. I have to disguise the purple bruises sometimes (although you take care they are not able to be seen).

Sometimes, the pain isn't physical. You control me, you humiliate me, you treat me as a non-person. You hurt me in my heart, my mind, my soul.

Yes, you say there were reasons for your behaviour. You were yourself abused. You were drunk. You had money problems. You thought me unfaithful. You felt trapped. You, deep down, feel inadequate. You have mental health issues...

SO many excuses.

But other people have the same issues – and they don't strike out in anger.

In truth, there is NO excuse. You made a **choice** to abuse me. It's that simple.

Can I forgive you? – that would be difficult. Can we start again? – Probably not. We've tried that too many times for me to believe that we could. But I do believe this – that you **could** change. You don't have to live your life as an abuser. You can change if you want to. That's your choice to make. Any only you can decide.