

Dear Husband

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Dear Husband

- (a) Her
- (b) Him
- (c) Now

(a) HER

I don't know how to begin for you. Words don't come easily. I really have not been able to understand you. I try to be unlike myself for you, but there is a pain in your eyes I cannot reach. Something which may not be because of me, but which is within you; a deep unhappiness, I hope I am wrong.

Every day I try, but I fail to make you happy. Somehow, you say the same hurtful things to me. I feel you're hiding something from me. Is it hate or love? I don't know.

It has been six years of our marriage, but there is something amiss. My love for you has been deep. The truth is that I cannot live with you, but there is a deep respect you require of your spouse, which I do not get from you.

This page, if you read it someday, may make you unhappy, but there is something in the heart that cannot understand you. Perhaps, then, I think that no one can understand anyone completely.

But in this nagging of a typical wife's narrative, I know there is a man with a heart of gold. A man who feels, who has a tender heart. Amidst all this, I believe I am happy with you.

(a) HIM

An alcoholic father, a mother battered in front of him. A boy growing up detesting his father. A boy trapped between protecting his mother and hating his father. This is how the

circle of hate continues. Such a man should be kinder to his wife, but when the time comes, he becomes a worse husband and a confused father.

Is all this true? Sometimes you fail to understand the people you presume are closest to you. Deceit, betrayal of things you stumble on which you are not meant

to see. The circle continues. Trying to delve deep into the zone of The male phenomenon, looking at the state of families, the children growing up amidst confusion, and yet life goes on. Man, him, son, husband, father.

These names change, but does he evolve? This zone of men where they are scared like chickens when younger; Later, their fear changes into anger, rage and violence. Institutions like marriage are becoming a mockery. A partnership between a man and his wife is a joke. I once dreamt of a man who was fast like the wind. I could never predict his next move. I did not know who he was. I could never forget his mix of evil triumph and my puzzlement and lack of understanding, when he knew all the while how he was playing with me.

(C) NOW

The tree shone in the shimmering moonlight, and he gazed at the moon, wondering where this life was leading him. The stars twinkled shyly, and he let out a sigh of nostalgia. He lit a cigarette and smoked, the eddies of smoke leading him to his glorious past. Once he had been the man, the dude, but now, when he gazed in the mirror, someone else stared back, defying his self-identity.

Life for him had taken unexpected turns, and he had remained in a corner, on a crossroad, wondering where to go next. His eyes had changed their perspective. Yes, he had once been a married man on the brink of a settled future, but little did he know that his very rash decision would go so awry. Now, on his own, he wondered if, had he been with her, things would have been different.

After the debacle of a bitter and humiliating divorce, the very idea of getting married again seemed to him an alien dream, a territory on which he was too cautious to tread again. All his friends had married, and many had their children, but he stood alone, reluctant to take his relationships with women to the threshold of matrimony.

His latest encounter had been going strong. The girl had expected a proposal soon, but then the man in the mirror had spoken again—the doubts of the venture. He thought she was way too young, and he did not want to suffer the suspense of a future riddled with the mystery of unexpected events.

His yearnings to start a family with her had been strong, but then the question of his sterility was always looming like a black cloud over his head. He was too cowardly to expose his vulnerability to her. He instead intended to keep the image of the Man, the Dude, intact, and he knew marriage would have ended that illusion sooner or later.

For a man to confess his weakness was worse than death. He thought the best course of action was to retreat and keep his dignity unsullied.

So, he left the girl heartbroken and madly in love with him, in an emotional lurch. But rumours about his suspected impotence had reached her ears. She was disgusted but also a wee bit curious. She wondered often whether it was true. Her love for him had been poignant and poetic. She was someone who had been able to penetrate his heart where none had reached.

They had shared their worlds for a while, talking for hours and hours. He had been able to pour his heart out to her. He had told her all, even the fact that his ex-wife's in-laws had accused him of tricking their daughter, knowing fully well that he could not start a family. The girl whom he had left had herself been through a rough patch. She had warned him in the beginning of her fragility, but he had seemed so considerate, so kind.

He was a romantic and sang songs to her. She was truly happy and was falling head over heels in love with him. The heat of his passion had been intense, and he had hinted many a time of a blissful future, but like his passion, his indecision was not far behind.

He suddenly changed colours and announced one day that things would not change. He spilt cold water over her warm and intense dream world. Like the many brief but intense whirlwind romances, this too ended the same way. His defeatist attitude had kept him away from happiness. At times, he really wanted to be with someone, but did not realise that the solitude in his life had become a permanent companion. No matter how much he wanted to

part ways with it, it followed him like a dark shadow, so close, so watchful of his every action.

Suddenly, the phone rang. It was her again, trying to make some meaningful conversation. He was his charming, self-betraying, no-loneliness self. He was in total control. She wondered whether she still figured in him. She was on the trail of his obnoxious behaviour with her. She had been so close to him. She had almost given herself all, and he had not stopped her. She had not allowed anyone to get so close to her soul.

After she had heard the knocks on the doors of her soul, she had been certain of his regard for her. But real life is not a fairy tale. The colours of reality are painted with the strokes of a higher hand, and what was in store for her was a lifeless life. She had contemplated remaining unattached for the rest of her life after this fiasco.