



To all of the abuse survivors of my world:

please pause to read this brief message, and give it a chance to find a home in your mind. You are not broken. You became adapted to a very bad situation at some point in the past- and your mind and soul did what they were supposed to do, and adapted well enough to get you through it, to help you survive it. Now that the situation is over, those adaptations may be still there; and in your present environment, they may be causing you trouble. These adaptations are not "damage" living inside in you somehow; they are artifacts of past moments in

*which you had to do and become hard things to survive. They are a record of valor, a record of survival, a record of pain. But they are not damage, and you are not a flawed person. You did not choose to be forced to adapt to a bad situation; the evil of others forced that upon you. You have no fault in this situation. **You bear no guilt, and you are not broken.** Until you accept those two foundational truths- and they will remain true until the sun of this world burns out, and even afterwards- your way will be harder. When you accept those truths, you will find that the way becomes easier. So please, consider this, know it for the truth it is, and if you can, feel its truth. If you are reading this, you are already victorious, not defeated- though you do have a savage foeman's marks on your shield. This is a testament to you, not a criticism or a sign of failure. The world's people will often not understand those marks on your shield. You will often find it hard to stop thinking about the viciousness that put them there. But you bear no eternal injury, only a fear that this may*

be so. You are not warped or diseased or ill. The people who abused you are warped, diseased and ill. **Never forget this.**

~Robin Artisson