Please don't hurt her, don't you know how much good she brings to the world, how she lights up a room as soon as she is in it, how she makes you feel like you matter? did you know she would make a fool of herself to make you smile or even how she simply asked “what do you want to be referred as” when asking about my disability, despite only knowing each other 9 months at that point and lifted the cloak of invisibility that society had put on me as a child. Please don't hurt her she can teach you a lot about disability, despite not having a disability herself.

A running thought that goes on in my head is yes you may feel that rape jokes are all fun and games, but do you know the trauma she has been through. Sitting there in silence not knowing who to trust to share her story. The memories of that horrible night come flooding back. Tell me, if these jokes were made towards your mam or sister or even a loved one, would they still be funny, probably not. Having to look over your shoulder every two seconds just in case someone is following you. Trying to come up with a concrete plan to keep yourself safe, clutching your keys in your hand preparing for what you may have to do. Please don’t hurt her, for she deserves more in this world.

Please don't hurt her? Have you seen her doing her own version of “the routine” from friends with her brother in St Stephens green back in the summer of 2020? Or sing and dancing to “the Gospel truth” from the Hercules soundtrack and suddenly screams out “hunkules”. She always knew how to make people laugh. Have you seen the emotional scares that others have left on her or make something beautiful out of the horrible cards she has been dealt? Instead of hurting her, show her that there is beauty within the world.

While yes nights out are great and getting to spend time with your friends but the fear of saying “text me when you’re home” and anxiously waiting for a response or drinking not so much so that you can keep your wits about you. Fearing not only if your drink gets spiked but now fearing if you get a needle in your neck. Having to put your faith in your best friend’s boyfriend to be able to protect you if something happens because you know deep down you have no chance at all if you get attacked in any way and the attacker would be more amused by your attempts of protecting yourself. Please tell me why that is fair to put that responsibility on to him? Do you know the damage that can do if one day he is unable to protect me, not only to me but to him?

Please don't hurt her, don't make her mother/father, siblings and friends sit at a funeral they should not be at or must bear a cross they should not have to bear. We would love to say not all men, but the reality is, it’s enough men to make women weary of every man in society. You say, “I'm only messing/joking” but the recurring thought that goes on inside my head is “how do we know you or others may follow through on what you say”.  having to text your dad

  “I just wanted to say how proud of the man you are. I only wish that I could go back in time to when Grandad Brown was alive to thank him for bringing you up the way you are and for instilling these beliefs into me and Jonathan. You have never resorted to violence of any kind and always made me feel safe”

shouldn't have to be said, not because you’re not grateful but violence against woman should never exist and men who treat woman with respect are a rare breed. Being asked at age 16 “do you have a boyfriend” on a night out and immediately saying “yes” out of fear of what they may do if you reject their advances. Learning that night that guys won’t leave you alone unless you are involved with another man is a bitter pill to swallow. Women aren’t property to be owned.

You ask where I get my strength, I get it from her, the woman who gave me life, the woman who knew how to make me feel safe, the woman who was told that her daughter had cerebral palsy at 8 months old and looked at her and said, “I love you even more”. The woman who sat down with me after a long day's work to scribe a bit my dissertation until nearly 11:30 at night when the dog was going bananas because of the bangers. Her, the woman who went to every school play at her children’s school because she knew they were important to go to. The woman who looked after loved ones when they were sick. She was and will be my first best friend and couldn’t be more thankful for her. She has the kindest soul and would be there for you in a heartbeat. The woman who taught me that no dream is too big and to use your struggles as a motivator to keep going. The woman to whom still knows that stroking her 27-year-old daughters’ hair when she is upset/stressed out can make her feel better. She is the one to which when I feel like screaming “the sky is falling, the sky is falling”, she would stop and say “hang on, the sky is not falling, let's sit down and find a way to fix this” but at the same time waits for her daughter to come back to planet earth before stepping in to help and then helps to pick up the pieces. Do you know how much strength that takes because all you want to do is be there for your child? The one who was sense of comfort from 1,526 miles away. Her, the woman to whom I secretly nicknamed “superwoman” growing up. Please don’t hurt her, she means the world to me. Please don’t hurt her, for I have struck gold in the mother department.

It's the old work colleague who worked with my mam for years to who I am forever grateful for bringing her daughter into the world because I cannot picture my life without her. I always wanted to know where her and my mam got their strength because they are some women. Knowing that there are other things to be worrying about than complaining about things that are irrelevant. She is like a second mother to me and growing up I always knew she was there when I needed her, just like my mam. Please don’t hurt her for she can see the potential you have to make a difference in the world. She always provided a haven for talking about any issues. The woman who said, “you're going to write a book and be on the late late show one day” (trust me if I had a euro for every time, she said that I would be sitting on a beach in the Bahamas with a million-dollar mansion behind me). The woman who will continuously say “but why can’t you” until she is satisfied with the answer because she knows deep down that you are unstoppable. Please don’t hurt her for she has a heart of pure gold and am truly grateful for having her in my life.

I get it from her. The woman who made me feel indestructible all throughout my childhood…the friendship that started with the sentence “come ere you, put this on, you’re my new best friend”. The woman to whom I swore I was going to protect from now on. I always wonder if she knows how much she is loved in this world, yes, we’ve had our struggles, but I always knew she was strong enough to get through her hard times. Can’t you see she is my Christina Yang from Grey's Anatomy. She is my person. I honestly couldn’t be prouder of the woman she has become, for I look on at her in pure awe. Her, the women to whom for 20+ years provided consistency in love and support in every hardship and celebration outside the family home. Her, the one who sends a “happy birthday sister” card even though we are not blood related (lord knows I wish we were). Did you know she can speak fluent “Lorna”? I have lost count of the number of times I’ve nearly sent her a message saying “I need you to quit your job and be my translator” because she always got what I was saying. Did you know she was partial inspiration to wanting to open an early years' service designed to allow children to access early intervention supports at an earlier age instead of having to wait until they enter primary school. The woman who knows not to say “are you ok” when she can blatantly see that you are not because she knows that having to pretend that you are “ok” is the last thing you need. Do you know how she will fixate on what you say and continuously make eye contact with you because she is so interested in what you say, do you know how rare that is in someone? Do you know how she will quite literally go to war for you? Don’t you know how she is like the Irish version of Penelope Garcia in Criminal minds, quirky and intelligent, funny, and witty. She is like the little voice in your head saying you can get through the pain and help you see sense in a time of madness. Did you know how she would go to any lengths to? Please don’t hurt her for she is the best and had the biggest impact on my life.

It is her, the grandmother who started it all. The woman who had a cup of tea ready bang on 3 pm and would say “do you want me to make you food” before I could step off the bus. The woman who instantly knew something wasn’t right and wouldn’t give up trying to get help because she only wanted the best for her granddaughter. The women who had a hot water bottle and got whisky ready and waiting for you when you were sick. She was the epitome of strength. The woman who went to every appointment if my parents couldn’t go. Did you know how she slipped a small Saint bookmark to keep me safe during a small and minor operation on my leg, so she knew I was protected during the operation. Did you know the biggest and best lessons she ever taught me was to never let my disability hold me prisoner…? I guess I have her to thank to be brave enough to talk about disability issues. There was something about her hugs or even being around her in general, would make you feel so safe. The woman who fought a battle so hard yet kept her amazing and beautiful personality till the bitter end. In a very scary world, she made it feel less scary. Despite growing up in a century where disability was deemed to be something to be ashamed of, she couldn’t be prouder. The woman to who would treat a friend of one of her grandchildren as if they were her own. You may not be able to hurt her but please don’t say her name in vain.

I get it from her, the woman I call “Nana Brown”, for I may not have known her personally but has given the gift of educating the young men in her life about compassion and not being afraid to show your emotions. The woman who looked after her family while her husband went off to war. Staying positive during a scary time. Her, the one who lives on through the eyes of her son. The son I get to call “Dad”. She was really a remarkable woman, even though I never had the privilege of meeting her, for she has held me in times of sorrow through the loving arms of her son. Who has taught me that inner beauty is what matters most through her daughters, that I am privileged to call “aunties”? To be able to call myself their granddaughter is the greatest honour and privilege a girl could have. You may not be able to hurt her but please don’t say her name in vain.

I get it from her. The woman who became a mother in the middle of a pandemic. The woman who is raising her daughter the way she deems fit, not caring what people think or say how she should raise her child. Seeing this little girl happy is the most beautiful thing I’ve seen. Even with social media being prevalent in society today, she’s put her daughter first and trusting her gut, know that’s real bravery. Please don’t hurt her, life is hard, and a little girl deserves to have her mum around to guide her along the way. Don’t make her have to say “I wish mum was here to see this” on her wedding day. She lost so much already before the age of 30 and has learned how to dance in the rain.

I get it from them, the women at the Trinity Ability co\_op and Disabled Woman Ireland. The amazing women who are working so hard to change the face of disability in society. Don’t you see how motivating they are to talk about real issues revolving those with disabilities. They are the ones who are trying to provide a better future for young women of Ireland. Tell me how amazing is that? I know I haven’t seen anything like it before. I have never met such inspiring bunch of women in my entire life. Please don’t hurt them, for they a lot more to offer the world. They are the ones that make a wacky idea not so wacky.

I get it from her, the two women who broke the bad habits of forcing social isolation. Why, do I hear you ask? Because of years of believing that I was better off on my own and save my heartbreak if the friendship didn’t last, pushing them away was the only way of protecting my heart. No one would blame her for walking away. The women who let grades slip because of stuff going on at home. I swear they dragged me through 3rd year kicking and screaming but we got there in the end. The woman who would check in more frequently to see if you needed anything, even if it was a friendly smile and give you their time to talk about how you are feeling. The woman who took it upon herself to text my mum to say “if you need anything, please let me know” without saying anything to me. Did you know she is the same woman to say “congratulations but you’re an idiot” when you tell her that you have gotten a conditional offer from Trinity, but the conditions were so easy to meet. This was the moment I knew these two women were going to be in my life forever. The one thing about strength that they taught me is that you don’t give up on your friends when they need you most. Please don’t hurt her, there needs to be more women like this in the world.

I get it from her. The women who know to body block when on a night out because they know that you can easily be knocked over if someone was to bump into you. Who know to take your hand and guide you through a crowded room without saying a word? The women who will happily stay with you when you are in the house on your own. The one who isn’t afraid of telling you to go away if she feels like you are getting a little too close for comfort…oh God I wish I was as fearless as her. The one who continues to laugh reminiscing when she got a surround sound version of Hakuna Matata from the Lion King and has a smile so contagious that your cheeks would hurt you. Did you know she can recite every quote from Harry Potter or every song from the Mamma Mia movies, that is some talent if you ask me. Please don’t hurt her, for you would learn a lot from her. I get it from her, the girl who the day before Red (Taylor’s version) was released says we should listen to the album together. Who knew that opening a bottle of wine and listening to Red (Taylor’s version) would feel so good? The woman who would do anything to make you smile and make you feel safe enough to open about your struggles. Little did I know the 8/9 years ago a big ray of sunshine was going to come into my life. Please don’t hurt them, for they are like medicine for your sadness.

A lot can be said for women in the music industry now days. They say “it’s a man's world” but have you heard her record that she wrote about her divorce? It’s stunning and you can see that she is not cold and bitter about what happened between her and her ex... Do you know what she is teaching to young girls…to be open to love and even through your worse moments, you can still get through it. It takes some amount of bravery to lay your heart bare, knowing that you may get criticised because of your gender. Unfortunately, the sad truth is while men are praised for the number of women, they “pull”, women are criticised for even looking at a guy. This woman must have nerves of steel because lord knows I wouldn’t be brave enough to write about something so personal and be so transparent with it. Violence against woman can change how you look at yourself and she is the modern-day hippy, that reinforces the idea of loving your body and embracing your individuality is the most beautiful thing you can do for yourself. Music is a beautiful thing and can reach so many people, she may provide a sense of hope that no-one else can give to a young girl. Her song till forever falls apart has given a newfound appreciation to the women I have surrounded myself with because I know that even through my darkest days, they will be there for me no matter what. This female artist could be the little trigger that goes off in a young girl’s head to get out of that abusive relationship they find themselves in. That takes real bravery, even in the initial stages of getting out of the relationship. Listen to her records and let her explain how to see the beauty within pain. To be reminded through her music that you should be loved and respected by all men, and you should expect nothing else, you need to be able to be one special person to do that. Please don’t hurt her, for her journey isn’t over yet.

Have you seen her fight for what is right with her music? Being gaslighted by a guy who she thought had her best interest at heart and not letting it get to her. Having her name dragged through the mud but silently building her empire back up like the queen she is and now as of May 2022 the proud owner of an honorary Doctorate from NYU. There is quite literally nothing that this woman can’t do. The woman who openly talks about woman’s issues…that’s activism right there my friend. Don’t you know how she had to reinvent herself because there is a difference viewpoint on men to women in music industry, now tell me, could you do that day in day out. She is living breathing proof that woman can truly have it all. When society tells her she can’t do something, she responds with “ha, watch me””. Have you thought about how women are viewed in society today……listen to her album “Folklore” and let her tell you about the issues women face daily? She is a reminder that woman should be feared. Did you know when I listen to her music, my confidence goes from 0-60 in 0.5 seconds, and I feel that nobody can hurt me. imagine if she can make one person out there feels that way, how many others are out there that feel the same way. Aside from her personal struggles, this woman has led the way to female empowerment with great elegance and poise. She is the woman who built her empire back up silently after being cancelled by the internet and is now one of the most respected and influential women in not only the music industry, but in society. She went through a sexual assault case where a radio presenter had sued her for millions because he lost his job due to him groping her and she counter sued for $1. Thankfully she won her case, but it takes a lot of bravery to relive what happened and being very aware that it may not go your way. For many women, this is not the case and end up feeling even more broken than before. It can leave you not knowing who to trust and who is truly on your side. Please don’t hurt her, for she may ignite a young girl to come forward and go through with her own case.

Please don’t hurt her for she tells young girls that love that doesn’t involve violence of any kind exists through her music. Did you know she writes about wearing your insecurities like a badge of honour? For most women when they are in abusive relationships, the abuser usually uses these insecurities against the victim to ensure they stay in the situation. She is reminding her listeners that the insecurities only make us stronger. Her tattoos are what is relevant to her. Her “Speak Up” tattoo is about using your own voice and not being afraid to use it. Violence against women is a fight that will continue to go on and our voices will never be diminished. Her tattoo reminds us we should never be afraid to speak up against violence against women. Did you know she has the words “I love you” tattooed on her palm (probably my favourite one of hers). The issue with violence against women is that it can leave women questioning if they are loved or not. She is providing those who are affected by violence however it may be reassurance that they are loved by doing something as simple as saying hi. I know this probably wasn’t what she intended but how beautiful is that? There are few people who openly talk about self-love and mental health like she does, specifically about anxiety…to be honest, I sit there laughing at how relatable it is. What she is doing is reminding people in that they are never alone and that its ok to feel that way sometimes. We all have quirks that should be celebrated. From the moment she opens her mouth, you can tell she has a beautiful soul. Let's face it life is hard and the one thing she demonstrates beautifully is that learning how to laugh at yourself when times get hard and to surround yourself with the people you love. Did you know on days I struggle badly with my mental health; I listen to her music and instantly feel less alone. Please don’t hurt them, for they are the most powerful and instrumental woman in the music industry and society. They deserve to teach younger generations that through hard work, determination, and kindness that anything is possible.

Please don't take her, don't you know how she saved my life. How she knew how to fight an army of demons that no one can see. you see you don't have to physically harm her to hurt her, you can hurt her with your words. When you say, “you think she would smile more” instead of “is everything ok”, have you thought that there may be other things going on in the background affecting her ability to interact with society to what you deem “appropriate”. can't you see she is trying her best and feeling like your best isn't good enough. Did you know how she will let you vent but can easily restrain you from having a pity party.

Don't you understand how God sent her down to be someone's angel on earth. She is a mother, a daughter, a best friend, and a lover, so please don't hurt her.  Did you know that our best memories are dressing up as Princesses and hitting my cousin with fairy wands because we thought it was funny when we were 5 and 3 years old or spend all night talking during sleep overs and then when we wake up, we decided to have smarties ice cream for breakfast? Did you know she is the reason I'm in Trinity College Dublin....the university I have been dreaming of going to since I was 6 years old. The one who said “no, for what you want to create, Trinity is your best option”? Do you know how good she is with children or how much of a big heart she has or is she just an object to you. Don't you know she was or still is the prayer someone is asking for? Please don't hurt her because she is the want in your hour of need.

“Oh, Hunny don’t cry” I hear my dad say while the principal at Ashling Murphy's school talks about how much of a great educator she was, seeing in his eyes that he is trying to come up with words to try comfort me but coming up short, but these are not tears of sadness, these are tears of anger. Anger because another young, amazing, and beautiful girl has been taken out of this world. Trying to pick out words to try to respond to him because the last thing you want is for him to think it's his fault, but I too am coming up short after expressing that those were tears of anger, so we sit in silence. Yes, we understand it’s not all men and believe me when I say the issue is that it’s enough men to make us weary of who and what is around us. Unfortunately, it can be hard to distinguish between who may hurt us and those who wouldn’t. There is no sign over a guy's head’s saying, “this guy won’t hurt you” and what makes it worse is when we do bring the issues to the table, we are made out to be mad women.

Waking up thinking is today the day my life will end at the hands of a man? Doing a mental checklist thinking do my parents know how much I love them, when was the last time I said, “I love you” to them, does my brother and dad know they were like my superman growing up. How much my brother would make a great father one day? For friends.... how much I am proud of their achievements.... fighting a battle no-one knew they were fighting, finding true love and how thankful I am for putting a smile on my face no one else could. Fearing of getting into an agreement with the people you dearly love because you don’t want them to focus on what was said in the argument. Examining your acrylic nails after locking up the house, wondering if they are long enough to mark my attacker, so he can be identified. Waiting with bated breath for your brother to text you back with a thumbs up after you send him your live location when you plan to go to the library in Trinity. I know it sounds like a simple task but at least he’ll have a fair idea of where I am if something happens or at least where about I last was.

Please don’t hurt her because if you do, you are robbing the world of the best that society can offer. Powerful women that shed light in total darkness, that are making real change in the world. Women who have the most beautiful hearts and souls but may never be seen because of a single decision. Please don’t hurt her because the world is a good place and is even better with them in it. You ask what type of society I want to live in, it's quite simple…a world where my future daughter doesn’t have to fear going out, to be respected and loved deeply. For society to look after and listen to her as they would with a man. For her to be empowered to speak up without fear of the repercussions. For my son, a society that teaches him that misogyny and violence against women are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. To listen and encouraged to ask questions about woman issues. I want my future daughter to live in a society where she can confide in my sons’ friends when something happens, and she doesn’t feel comfortable talking to me yet. Truth be told, I'd much rather her go to my son's friend and feel comfortable than feel scared telling me. I pray to God nothing happens to her, but I know deep down that she will tell me when she is ready. This is her story, and she should be the one to be able tell it. A society that brings these issues in education. Remember the issue with violence against woman starts with consent and children learn the basics of consent when they are very young, so this is not a hard issue to bring into the education system. A society where his friends pull him up on something he said instead of egging him on. This world isn’t completely lost for I have seen how my brother, his friends, my dad, and a friends boyfriend treat the women in their life and my heart is filled with hope.