

## An Open Letter to Black Men Wherever We May Be,

It's time for a conversation. One that has been had over and over again since the abolition of slavery. Only within this conversation, I intend not to speak about how we can become better men in our current state. But how we can reject the sense of Man, one that is governed by Patriarchal thinking. I believe we have the tools to create the Men we want to be, to form the community that allows us to live full and healthy lives, embodying a new sense of manhood that embraces the wide swaths of expression and identity. No longer finding any use or subscribing to the ideals of Patriarchy, tossing to the side the evils of said Patriarchy and white supremacy that continues to oppress us and those we love. Rebelling against the colonialist thinking of Man and creating for ourselves a manhood that does not steep itself in violence, subjugation, or domination. Relinquishing our deep confusion over our hatred of the tortures of whiteness but our seeking of its validation of our bodies. Of us, as Men.

Our liberation is not only our own but will reflect that of Black Womxn and Black LGBTQ folks as well. The more we look to entrench ourselves in Patriarchy, attempting to succeed as Benevolent Patriarchs in our communities, we only continue to perpetuate the violence and harm of Patriarchy. To become radical in our effort to exert love and care for ourselves and those we are in community with, we cannot continue to uphold the ideas of masculinity and manhood that serve Capitalistic Patriarchy. We should not see ourselves in some grandiose gender war with those in our community, instead we have to stand beside those, who like us, will only experience freedom from White Supremacy and its ever-reaching impact, through solidarity, not subjugation. We have failed as men not because of our ineptitude to play the game of White Supremacy, but because we have lost ourselves in that struggle, instead of the struggle for freedom. Misinterpreting the pillars of success given to us by Whiteness as something to strive for as opposed to something to despise.

There is evidence that these are not new ideas. From W.E.B DuBois to Malcolm X, radical Black Men have looked to relinquish themselves from Patriarchy. We must do the same to prevent the continuous cycle of harm inflicted upon those whom we claim to love and care for. We did not create the underlying conditions that plague us today, but if we do not recognize and assume accountability for our perpetuation of harm, we will never be free. We must read and engage with radical work, decenter and de-platform ourselves from the narrative of liberation, and instill practices of care, respect, love, and responsibility. Lastly, we must stop the perpetuation of harm, violence, and silencing of Black Womxn and Black LGBTQ by any and all men, and continue ourselves to work and unlearn instilled harmful practices to prevent infliction of harm as well. I hope and believe that we can do this; it is wishful thinking, but it is imperative if we are to find liberation.

Sincerely,

Brandon Pegram.