

## Dear America

Erin Beth Byers

Dear America,

I am a woman. I am an American Soldier.

I want to tell you that I have been to war. I HAVE served on the front lines. I am a combat medic. I have seen my brothers shed their blood and lose their lives for freedom. I have tried to save them.

I have spent days without a shower. Tired, hot, and hungry. I have sacrificed what most women could not. I slept on concrete with my boots still on. I was “one of the guys.” Yes, I was scared. I cried at night.

I am a fighter. I have felt defeat. I’ve wanted to give up. Even when I didn’t understand “why” we’re at war, I continued to fight. I had family at home and citizens that depended on me. Yes, even the ones who disagreed. I was fighting for those I love. I was fighting for those I loathed. I was fighting for my country.

I want to ask you, “If I could see past this hate and fight for those who are against this war, why can’t you support me even if you disagree?” I know it is hard to do. I fought while some at home protested at the funerals of those whom my comrades couldn’t save.

I cannot shake from my mind those eyes.

America, I challenge you to respect those who fight and have fought for your freedom to do and say what you please. I ask you to protest in silence those who stand for what you are against.

America, I am home. I am not whole.

Yours Truly,

SGT Erin Byers, US Army

