

# Why Are We So Quick to Reduce Women's Lives to Mere Numbers?

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*"The very moment you first take a glance at those eyes, that angelic grimace, that mild yet elegant smirk, you can't even begin to elucidate how much you fall in love. While you're holding the baby you merely gave birth to, your soul speaks to you, and it does not cease to amaze you. You utterly sit there while you can feel the stinging sensation in your very bones. But that doesn't matter anymore. You're holding an individual with infinite potential. You promise yourself you will love them no matter what. The baby crying on your shoulder senses this commitment, their distressed weeping slowly becomes an echo, and your sufferings merge as if you are a single individual."*

I remember my mom narrating this story for me when I was little. This was the first time I genuinely acknowledged the magnitude of the love we share. I was her blood, her creation, an irreplaceable part of her very soul. While I grew up, she always told me that despite all her major successes in academic life, I was her most significant success. I was blessed enough to have her by my side, and through any dynamics in our relationship, we always had each other. However, each time news breaks that yet another woman is killed in Turkey, I'm influenced in ways I cannot describe. I cannot help but wonder, if she had any children, how must they feel after the sole person that is compassionate, kind, and tender in her own way is gone. It shatters my heart, and I find myself in a sorrow I can't escape.

One of the examples that shattered my soul was [Emine Bulut's death](#). She was a mother, feeling the very sentiments towards her daughter that my mother feels towards me. She loved her; she cherished her; she felt as if her daughter was one of her most enormous successes.

Emine Bulut's daughter was alongside her when a man brutally murdered her. He didn't think. He didn't consider the consequences and effects of his action. Within a blink of an eye and a deep stabbing, she was dead. The hopes she had for her daughter, the expectations, the moments she looked forward to spending, all gone. The daughter cried, "No, mom, please, I do not want you to die. Please. Please. Please." Turkey mourned her for days, months, years, and for some, the pain will remain everlasting.

Emine Bulut is one of many examples of women brutally murdered systematically. Some acclaimed literature sources and news platforms state that violence against women is a critical problem in Turkey. For instance, a [paper by Sadık Toprak](#) seeks to identify the characteristics of perpetrators, murders took place, and the social conventions that are embedded in the context of femicides. According to his conclusion, "strategic evaluations must be done, especially in two domains: political action and technical steps."

While women are getting killed every single day, they become nothing but a number afterward. Their love for their children, their desire for certain things in life, and their future plans reduce to a numerical value in a pool of femicide cases. While the patriarchal stereotypes encourage these violations towards women, the hashtags such as "#WhatWasSheDoingOutsideThatLate?" that emerge after the crime still discuss the imperfections of the woman murdered. The question raised by men inquiries the behaviors of the woman that led the man to his "breaking point." Somehow, even after her life just ended in the cruelest way possible, the blame is still on the woman.

The most fundamental problem that threatens the safety of women in patriarchal societies is the perception of men as if they are allowed not to control their waves of anger; they are people that we must rub on the right way, not obligated to face the consequences of their actions. The patriarchal societies often tend to identify with the male offender, not with the women victim. Moreover, "[honor killings](#)" suggest that men are justified to end a woman's life merely because she did something that goes against his pre-determined moral frames.

Women are not numbers; they are breathing, living beings who have hopes about life, so much love to offer, and so much diversity to bring. All ignored as a murderer turns them into a mere number. However, we, as members of this society, have the ability and opportunity to change this social structure where men are the determining factor in women's lives. As an initial step, we should change the way we speak. Speaking, the source of all the social interactions in people's lives, affects every aspect of our lives. And unfortunately, it consists of phrases that are

enormously sexist and plants in people's heads the idea that women are less of a human than men. If people were to slowly exclude those phrases from their language, it would have an enormous effect on the societal structure. Another way to combat these brutal cases and their aftermath is spreading awareness in creative ways to recognize their emotional significance. For instance, in 2019, a graphical designer, Vahit Tuna, created a **towering wall** that consists of 440 heeled shoes glued onto it. In this way, he commemorated all 440 women that lost their life due to femicide in Turkey.