Mothers' Day May 9, 2004

An open letter from Pulitzer Prize-winning author Alice Walker to David Novak, CEO of Yum! Brands (parent company of KFC):

Suppose in a future life you come back as a chicken. You are small and fuzzy and scared.

You feel heavy and hot, suffocating, because you are constantly drugged; your body forced to grow so large and fast your bones cannot support it: they begin to break.

After an infinity of unbearable pain you are lifted out of the cage into which you were born, and from which your mother was taken immediately after your birth, and dumped, with thousands of others, into a vat of boiling water. Most of the others are dead, but for some reason, you are not. You drown, choking, in the smelly, scalding water.

I do not wish this for you. I do not wish it for myself. I do not wish it for the thousands that eat at Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC).

You may not realize that the nearly 9 billion animals raised and killed for food each year in this country are denied everything that comes naturally to them and are abused in ways that would result in jail time for the abuser if the animals were cats or dogs. Yet chickens, cows, and pigs can feel pain and suffer in just the same way and are no less deserving of our respect than the animals who live in our homes.

Alice Walker once wrote, "The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans any more than black people were made for whites, or women for men." Please consider vegetarianism as a way of rejecting the violence and injustice that takes place behind the slaughterhouse wall.

