



# SILENT FURY

*Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth*

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Novella

## Prologue

The morning tasted of warm dough and weariness. The small bakery on the corner was one of those places where Berlin, for a fleeting moment, pretended to be an ordinary city. A place where people discarded their voices before heading to work. A place where no one stood out.

Tamara stood in line, hands buried deep in her coat pockets, her gaze fixed on the display without truly seeing anything. The sounds around her slid past like water over glass. Conversations, footsteps, the clinking of cups. Everything was muffled, as if the world were unfolding behind an invisible wall.

In front of her, four men sat at a table—loud, impatient, circling only themselves. The young woman behind the counter smiled, though her eyes were tired. She moved quickly, almost too quickly, as if trying to catch up with the day before it caught up with her.

When it was Tamara's turn, the server raised her head and smiled at her. A small, warm smile that, for a second, touched something in Tamara she thought had long been lost.

Then, a shout sliced through the air.

A sharp, ugly word.

A command that had no right to be one.

A tone that made the bakery suddenly grow narrow.

The server froze.

So did Tamara.

Something inside her tipped. Not suddenly—more like a glass that had stood on the edge for a long time and now received the final, barely audible nudge.

The noises grew louder again. Too loud.  
The air grew thin.  
The world grew too close.

Tamara felt her heart hammering against her ribs as if trying to break free. Her fingers cramped around something she hadn't consciously touched. A reflex, not a decision. A shadow rising from a depth she did not recognize herself.

The server said something, but Tamara didn't hear it.  
The men laughed, but their voices didn't reach her.  
Everything became a single, vibrating note.

Then came the silence.

Not in the bakery—but within her.

A silence that did not soothe, but swallowed.  
A silence like a black hole: heavy, cold, absolute.

She turned around, took her bag, and left.  
Not hastily. Not fleeing.  
More like someone who cannot follow themselves.  
Outside, a gust of wind swept across the street.  
Berlin rushed on, unimpressed, unmoved.  
The city took her in, just as it took in everyone who left something behind.

Tamara walked without looking back.  
She didn't know where.

Only away from the moment that was spreading through her like a crack.

A crack that would never heal.

## **1 – Berlin: A City of Soot and Voices**

Berlin was never just a city. Berlin was a sound—a deep, vibrating rumble rising from basements, backyards, and squatted houses. A city that did not belong to itself, but to those loud enough to be heard and those quiet enough to remain in the shadows.

Between the crumbling facades of Friedrichshain, the layers of graffiti on Rigaer Straße, and the flickering lights of the Köpi, moved a community that refused to carry a name. Others called them "the Autonomists." They didn't call themselves anything at all. They simply lived—and they dissented.

They were people who believed in the possibility of a society existing without mastery. Not as a utopia, but as a daily practice. They built kitchens where no one had to pay. Workshops where no one asked who you were. Spaces where, for a moment, the world stopped shaping you—and you could begin to shape it back.

Yet the city saw them differently. For some, they were static noise, a black stain on the cityscape, a collective of contradiction and rage. For others, they were the last reminder that freedom was not just a word, but a state of being that had to be defended.

They came from different worlds: students, laborers, dropouts, refugees, people who had seen too much, and people who had not yet seen enough. What bound them was no program, no party, no manifesto. It was a feeling: that the world, as it was, could not be allowed to remain.

They did not believe in the order dictated from above. They believed in self-organization, in solidarity, in the power of small communities. Some carried the ideas of anarchism like a quiet fire within—not as chaos, but as a radical form of responsibility.

Their goal was never power. Their goal was the absence of power.

They wanted to create spaces where people were not controlled, but seen. Spaces where one didn't have to function, but was allowed to exist. Spaces that were not bought, but fought for.

But Berlin is a city that measures every freedom, registers every deviation, archives every unrest. The police knew the addresses where the doors were reinforced and the windows draped with banners. The authorities knew the names of the houses that never appeared in the land register but surfaced in every political debate.

The Autonomists responded not with words, but with presence. With banners hanging from balconies. With demonstrations that moved through the streets like a black river. With actions that forced the city to look at itself in the mirror.

They did not want violence, but they did not fear it either. They did not want power, but they resisted it. They did not want to be heroes, but they became symbols.

Those who looked at the scene from the outside often saw only the spectacle: the Black Block, the masked figures, the slogans. But behind every mask stood a human being carrying a story—an injury, a hope, a longing for a different life.

Some were anarchists, others were not. Some read Bakunin, others read nothing at all. Some wanted revolution, others just a place where they could breathe.

The autonomous scene was no dogma. It was a condition. An experiment. A perpetual resistance against the feeling that the world had already been decided.

## **2 – Evenings in Zossener Straße**

The apartment in Zossener Straße was old, but not weary. It bore the traces of many lives lived there before them: worn-down door handles, creaking floorboards that commented on every step, and windows that didn't truly keep the city's noise out, but merely transformed it into a muffled hum.

For Tamara, this apartment was not a home, but a place where she could breathe. For Beriwan, it was an anchor in a world that confronted her every day with professional stories heavier than the furniture in the rooms.

Every evening, as the city outside transitioned into its nocturnal drone, the two sat at the small kitchen table. A lamp with a crooked shade cast warm light onto plates, glasses, and the remnants of a simple meal. It had become a ritual—unplanned, unspoken, simply grown like a plant that no one had consciously watered.

Beriwan talked.

Tamara listened.

It was a quiet division of labor that served them both.

Beriwan spoke of the people she cared for: refugees from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan. People who had lost their homeland, their families, their language—sometimes even themselves. She didn't speak to impress, but to process. Her voice was calm, but a shadow often lingered in her eyes, showing how much she carried with her.

“Today a boy told me he hasn't slept in months,” she said once, tracing her fork absentmindedly across her plate. “He's afraid to close his eyes because he thinks the night will take him back.”

Tamara only nodded. She knew how nights could feel.

On other evenings, Beriwan spoke of politics—not in terms of headlines, but in terms of connections. She didn't know the Middle East from books, but from stories, from family memories, from conversations with people who carried the world not in theories, but in scars.

“Most people here think the conflict is black and white,” she said once. “But it’s gray. As gray as the sky over Berlin in November.”

Tamara smiled faintly.

“At least gray is honest,” she murmured.

Beriwan liked this kind of conversation. She liked the way Tamara listened—attentive, yet without imposing. She liked that Tamara did not pretend to have answers. In a world full of people who always had answers, that was rare.

Yet, she felt a restlessness in Tamara. A tension that did not stem from the city, nor from politics, nor from the debates in the leftist centers. It was something deeper—something Tamara did not voice and perhaps could not even name.

Sometimes, when Tamara thought Beriwan wasn't looking, she would stare for minutes at a single point on the wall, as if a crack were growing there that only she could see.

Beriwan did not ask.

She knew that some questions may only be asked when the other is ready to hear them.

And yet, there was a quiet worry, threading like a thin wire through her thoughts. Not loud, not pressing—but constant.

The evenings in Zossener Straße were a balance.

Fragile, but real.

A place where two women from two worlds found a shared silence that said more than many words.

Berlin rushed on outside, unimpressed. But in that kitchen, beneath the crooked lampshade, something emerged that the city did not know: a cautious, unobtrusive closeness.

### 3 – Mehringhof

The Mehringhof was not a building. It was an echo.

An echo of decades of political struggle, of voices that never quite fell silent, and of stories inscribed into the walls like old graffiti that no one bothered to paint over anymore.

Entering the inner courtyard, it smelled of coffee, printer's ink, and cold concrete. Bicycles leaned against walls covered in posters: concerts, readings, solidarity parties, workshops, calls to action, warnings. Some fresh, some yellowed, some pasted over one another like layers of a city archiving itself.

Tamara liked this place.

Not because of the politics—which were often loud, contradictory, and sometimes exhausting.

But because of the voices.

Because of the way people spoke here, as if every word meant something.

That evening, the café on the ground floor was more crowded than usual. The chairs were pulled closer together, the air was warm, and the conversations hung over the room like a hum. On the small stage sat four people, tasked with leading a discussion on Israel and Palestine. A topic that, in Berlin, was never just a topic—it was a magnifying glass that amplified everything: rage, hope, ignorance, ideology.

Beriwan had persuaded Tamara to come.

“It’s good to hear different voices,” she had said.

Tamara had nodded, though she knew some voices would hurt her.

They sat at a small table at the edge. Beriwan ordered tea; Tamara, a black coffee that tasted more bitter than necessary.

The discussion began.

First, the moderators spoke of history: the Mandate, wars, occupation, Oslo, settlements, blockades. Words heavy as stones. Words Tamara knew, but which sounded different here—more distant, more theoretical, as if they were part of a seminar and not part of a life.

Then, someone from the audience spoke up.

A young man in a black hoodie, raising his hand as if presenting a manifesto.

“Israel is a colonial apartheid state,” he said.

Some nodded. Others scoffed.

Tamara felt something inside her tighten.

An older man disagreed.

“It’s more complicated. Both sides...”

He didn’t get far.

A woman interrupted him—loud, sharp, convinced.

“There are no 'two sides' when one side holds the power.”

Beriwan watched the scene with calm attention.

Tamara watched Beriwan.

The discussion grew heated.

Terms flew through the room like rocks:

“Occupation,” “Resistance,” “Security,” “Human Rights,”  
“Terror,” “Self-determination.”

Every term was a universe.

Every term was a wound.

Tamara suddenly felt like an outsider.

Not because she disagreed—but because she realized that no one here knew what it was like to grow up in a kibbutz that existed constantly between everyday life and the alarm.

No one knew what it was like to wake up at night because an impact somewhere made the earth tremble.

No one knew what it was like to lose one’s childhood in a fraction of a second.

She wanted to say something.

She wanted to contradict, to explain, to tell her story.

But her voice caught in her throat.

Beriwan placed a hand on her arm.

Not firmly, just perceptibly.

A silent: *You don’t have to.*

On the stage, a young woman was now speaking about the necessity of solidarity with Palestine. Her words were clear, well-formulated, politically pristine.

But to Tamara, they felt like a text learned by heart.

“She speaks from conviction,” Beriwan said softly. “But she doesn’t know the pain that comes when history lives on in your skin.”

Tamara looked at her.

“And you? Do you know it?”

Beriwan smiled sadly.

“I know what it’s like when history is your family.”

A sentence that said more than the entire discussion.

When the event ended, the room dissolved into chatter. People formed small groups, continuing the debate, arguing, laughing, smoking in the courtyard. The Mehringhof lived as it always lived: loud, contradictory, imperfect.

Tamara and Beriwan walked out slowly.

The air outside was cool, the sky dark, the city an endless rustle.

“What are you thinking?” Beriwan asked.

Tamara didn’t answer immediately.

She looked at the street, at the passing lights, at the shadows moving like thoughts one cannot hold onto.

“I think,” she said finally, “that everyone is talking, but no one is listening.”

Beriwan nodded.

“Then we must listen. At least us.”

They walked on in silence.

And in that silence lay something Tamara couldn’t name—perhaps comfort, perhaps a premonition, perhaps the beginning of a path that would change them both.

## 4 – The Months of Silence

The news didn't come like a blow.  
It came like a crack.

A crack that pulled slowly through Tamara's core—noiseless, without warning, without any way to stop it. A phone call, a name, a sentence—and the world she knew dissolved like dust in the light.

She was sitting on the floor of her room when Beriwan opened the door.

Not crying.

Not screaming.

Just sitting, as if someone had altered gravity and she could no longer move.

“Tamara?”

Beriwan's voice was cautious, as if she were approaching a wounded bird.

Tamara raised her gaze.

Her eyes were wide, but empty.

As if someone had extinguished the light within them.

“They are dead,” she said.

The words didn't sound like words.

More like something falling out of her.

Beriwan knelt beside her.

She didn't ask what had happened.

She knew there were moments when questions only deepened the wounds.

Tamara didn't tell her until hours later.  
Not coherently.  
Not completely.  
Only fragments that came out of her mouth like shards of glass.

### **Kibbutz Kfar Aza.**

Her parents.  
Her brother.  
A massacre she did not understand and would never understand.

Then, the silence began.

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Days turned into weeks, weeks into months.

Tamara moved through the apartment like a shadow that had forgotten whom it belonged to. She spoke little, ate little, slept hardly at all. Sometimes she sat for hours by the window, staring at the street as if searching for something there that could never return.

Beriwan was there.  
Not intrusive.  
Not overprotective.  
Simply there.

She brewed tea, set it on the table, and said nothing when Tamara left it untouched.  
She sat with her in the evenings, even when Tamara remained silent.

She draped a blanket over her shoulders when she shivered.  
She was a silent presence—warm, patient, unwavering.

Tamara knew she had to go to Israel. Not out of political duty, but because she wanted to understand what had become of the kibbutz where she had spent her childhood summers. Perhaps she also hoped to find someone who could tell her what had truly happened. So she booked a flight—and found only emptiness.

Sometimes Tamara spoke in her sleep.  
Words in Hebrew that Beriwan did not understand.

Names.

Cries.

Sometimes only a strangled sound that was like a lost breath.

After a few weeks, Beriwan took her to a clinic.

Not because Tamara wanted to—but because she needed to.

The doctors spoke of trauma, of shock, of complicated grief.

Words that sounded clinical but failed to describe what was unfolding inside her.

The clinic was white, quiet, orderly.

Tamara was gray, soundless, chaotic.

She did not fit, yet she stayed.

For three months.

She spoke to no one.

She rarely cried.

She felt nothing—and the nothingness was worse than any pain.

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When she returned, she was thinner, paler, quieter. But something had changed.

Not much.  
Only a spark.  
A barely visible point in the darkness.

Beriwan noticed it first.  
The way Tamara stayed at the table a little longer in the morning.  
The way she occasionally picked up a book, even if she didn't open it.  
The way she didn't vanish into bed immediately in the evening, but remained in the living room, as if testing whether the world could still support her.

But within Tamara, something else was growing.  
Something she showed to no one.  
Something she hardly understood herself.

It was not a plan.  
Not a decision.  
Only a thought, threading like a dark wire through her nights.

A thought that terrified her—  
and at the same time, was the only thing that made her feel as though she wasn't completely shattering.

She did not speak of it.  
Not to the doctors.  
Not to Beriwan.  
Not even to herself.  
But in the early morning hours, when the city still slept and the world was silent for a moment, she felt it more clearly than anything else:  
the desire to reclaim something that could not be reclaimed.

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Berlin rushed on.

The trams screeched, the bars filled, people argued over politics as if the world were a debating club.

Yet in Zossener Straße, in a room with a crooked poster and a window that never quite closed, sat a young woman who had lost everything.

And in that void, something began to grow that she could not yet name.

Not yet.

## **5 – The Shadow Paths of the City**

Berlin had many faces.

By day, it showed its facades, its cafés, its bicycles, its people moving through streets as if part of an endless current.

But at night, the city transformed.

It became porous.

Permeable.

A place where things existed that had no name in the light of day.

Tamara began to disappear into these nights.

Not suddenly.

Not dramatically.

More like someone stepping slowly into a fog that both hides and draws them in.

She told Beriwan she was going for a walk.

Or that she needed fresh air.

Or that she'd be out only for a moment.

Beriwan nodded every time, but her eyes betrayed that she saw more than Tamara was willing to reveal.

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The autonomous spaces Tamara had once seen as political venues now became something else.

Not sanctuaries—more like thresholds.

Spaces where people surfaced who were never asked who they were, as long as they knew how to remain silent.

These were places where the air smelled of cold metal, old wood, and cigarettes.

Places where conversations were held in half-sentences.

Places where one did not know if a person was a friend, a stranger, or something in between.

Tamara moved through them with a stillness that frightened her.

She spoke little.

She observed much.

Sometimes she sat in a back room where the walls were covered in posters that had long since lost their color.

Sometimes she stood in a courtyard where people smoked and whispered.

Sometimes she followed someone through a corridor that smelled of oil and where the lights flickered.

She realized she was not looking for answers, but for a place where the pain did not immediately strike back.

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There were people who knew her without knowing her name. People who understood her silence.

People who didn't ask why she was out at night.

Some had eyes that had seen too much.

Others had hands that were too steady.

Still others had voices that only whispered when they were certain no one was listening.

Tamara knew she was moving into a world not made for her. But she also knew that she found something there she could not find in the light of day:

a kind of clarity born of darkness.

It was not clarity in a moral sense.

Not one that could be defended or explained.

It was a clarity born of pain.

Of loss.

Of the feeling that the world had taken something from her that she would never get back.

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One evening, as she was leaving the apartment, Beriwan stood in the doorway.

"Take care of yourself," she said softly.

Tamara nodded.

She wanted to say that everything was fine.

That she just needed fresh air.

That she would be back soon.

But the words caught in her throat.

She knew that Beriwan knew the truth—or at least the direction in which the truth lay.

As she descended the stairs, she heard Beriwan's voice once more, muffled, almost like a prayer.

"Come back."

Tamara paused briefly.  
Only for the duration of a single breath.  
Then she walked on.

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The nights grew longer.  
The paths darker.  
The conversations shorter.

And somewhere in that darkness, between backyards,  
basements, and rooms that had no names, something began to  
take shape.

Not a plan.  
Not yet.  
Only a possibility.  
A thought that clung to her like a shadow.

Berlin saw none of it.  
The city was too large, too loud, too preoccupied to notice the  
paths of a single woman.

But the shadows noticed her.  
And she noticed the shadows.

It was the beginning of a road she could no longer leave.  
Or no longer wanted to leave.

Beneath all the weariness lay something else. Something that  
refused to die. A rage that had no name, but a very clear  
origin.

## 6 – The City Reads the Papers

Berlin learned of it first from the headlines. Not from screams, nor sirens, nor images—but from words encased in printer's ink, spreading across breakfast tables, subway seats, and café counters.

"Unknown man found dead in Neukölln."

"Investigators do not rule out a political motive."

"Links to Palestinian networks being examined."

The articles were cautiously phrased, as they always are when no one knows what truly happened.

Or when too many people know, and no one is willing to say it.

Tamara did not read the reports.

She only saw the newspapers *Berlener Zeitung* laid on the table each morning before leaving for work.

She saw the headlines that reached for her heart like cold fingers.

She saw the photos of emergency vehicles, the anonymous quotes from investigators, the speculations of commentators.

But she did not read.

She couldn't.

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A week later, the next report followed.

"Dead man in Spandau—investigators examine right-wing extremist background."

"Indications of links to international groups."

"Interior Ministry: No danger to the public."

The city reacted as it always did:

with rumors, with half-knowledge, with conversations held in bars and kitchens as if everyone had suddenly become an expert on security policy.

Contradictory theories circulated on social media.

Some spoke of a campaign of vengeance.

Others of a new extremist cell.

Others still of coincidences that could be nothing of the sort.

Berlin was a city that fed on stories.

And this story tasted of fear, of fascination, of the feeling that something was simmering in the underground that no one could grasp.

In the early morning, while the city was still suspended in twilight, Tamara returned. Without a word, she stood in the kitchen, filling the kettle with water as the first scent of coffee slowly rose. Beriwan entered, still heavy with sleep, and stopped short. Dark, dried bloodstains trailed along Tamara's shirt, barely visible in the dim light. A brief glance, a nearly inaudible intake of breath. She asked nothing. Tamara said nothing. Only the kettle began to sing, as if it were the only one who knew where she had been in the night.

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Beriwan observed Tamara more closely during those days.

Not with suspicion—but with dread.

Tamara seemed calmer than before, but it was a calmness that did not soothe.

A calmness like a lake too smooth, beneath whose surface something dark lay in wait.

"Have you seen the news?" Beriwan asked one evening.

Tamara shook her head.

"No."

"It's... strange," Beriwan said. "The police are fumbling in the dark. No one knows anything. Or no one is saying anything."

Tamara nodded without looking up.

She stirred her tea, though it had long since gone cold.

"Sometimes," Beriwan said cautiously, "I get the feeling that this city swallows things. People, stories, truths. And eventually, it spits out something else."

Tamara smiled faintly.

"Berlin was always a poor storyteller."

Beriwan looked at her for a long time.

Too long.

Tamara felt the gaze but did not look away.

"If you have something on your heart..." Beriwan began.

"I know," Tamara interrupted softly.

"But I have nothing."

It was a lie.

One that felt heavy.

But she said it with a composure that sounded convincing.

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The city searched on.  
The police released vague clues, appealed for help, ruled nothing out.

Talk shows debated radicalization, imported conflicts, and the question of whether Berlin was still safe.

Yet no one spoke of Tamara.

No one saw her.

No one suspected that a young woman, who sat quietly drinking her tea in the morning and walked through Kreuzberg with lowered eyes in the evening, could be part of this story.

Berlin was large enough to hide people.

And small enough to lose them.

In Zossener Straße, everything remained outwardly the same.

The floorboards creaked.

The lamp flickered occasionally.

The tea grew warm, then cold.

The evenings came and went.

But between the pages of the newspapers, between the headlines, between the conversations the city held, a silence grew that only two people could hear:

Tamara.

And Beriwan.

A silence that grew heavier.

A silence that asked questions without using words.

A silence that knew the truth was not in the papers.

Not yet.

## 7 – Voices from a Different Pain

The evening was quieter than usual.

Beriwan had cooked, but Tamara had barely eaten. The air in the kitchen was warm, yet something invisible hung within it—a tension that wasn't loud, but heavy.

"I'd like to introduce you to someone," Beriwan finally said. Her voice was steady, but Tamara heard the undertone. A plea. Or perhaps an attempt to open something that had long been locked away.

The man who stood in the living room shortly after was slender, with a face that looked older than it should. His eyes were the color of earth after rain—dark, but not dead. He introduced himself as Soran. A Kurdish refugee whom Beriwan supported.

Tamara gave a slight nod. She expected nothing. She wanted to expect nothing. They sat down. Beriwan poured tea. The steam rose like a soft curtain between them.

"Beriwan tells me you come from Kfar Aza," Soran began. His voice was soft, but it carried something Tamara recognized instantly: a weight that did not come from words.

"Yes," she replied. She said no more.

Soran nodded slowly, as if picking up a thread stretched between them. "I come from Germiyan," he said. "From a village that no longer exists."

Tamara looked up.

Not out of curiosity—more as a reflex born of pain.

"It was destroyed," he continued. "During Enfal."

The word hung in the room like a shadow. Tamara had heard of it, but never from someone who had lived through it. Beriwan looked at Soran, as if to give him courage. He took a deep breath.

"I was a child," he said. "But I remember the smell. The silence afterward. The people who were no longer there." He did not speak quickly. Nor dramatically. He spoke as if reaching into a depth that had been sealed for a long time. "Many of us were taken. Many killed. Many..." He broke off, searching for a word that didn't exist. "Many simply disappeared."

Tamara felt something move inside her. Not empathy—she hadn't felt that in months. It was more of a recognition. An echo.

"And those who did it," Soran said quietly, "were not only Iraqis. Some were Palestinians. Not all. Not even many. But enough to confuse us. To hurt us. To make us ask why people who were oppressed themselves would do such a thing to us."

He looked at Tamara. Not accusingly. Not searching. Just openly. "It took me a long time to understand that pain has no nationality. And neither does cruelty."

Tamara swallowed. Her hands trembled slightly, but she hid them beneath the table. "Why are you telling me this?" she finally asked. Her voice was brittle.

Soran smiled sadly. "Because I have seen the way you look. Like someone who has lost something that isn't coming back."

Beriwan placed a hand on Tamara's back. A gesture that said: *You are not alone.*

"I lost my father," Soran said. "My mother. Two sisters. It took me years not to think of revenge every single day."

Tamara held her breath. "And?" she whispered. "Did you forget them?"

"No," he replied. "But I learned that revenge is a fire that only burns the one who carries it."

The sentence struck Tamara like a cold wind. Not because it was new—but because it came from someone who didn't know it from books.

"I don't know what you've experienced," Soran said. "But I know what it's like when the world tells you to move on, even though you don't know how."

Tamara looked at him. For the first time in months, she truly looked at someone. "I don't know if I can move on," she said. It was the most honest thing she had said since the death of her family.

Soran nodded. "Then start small. Breathe. Eat. Sleep. And if one day you can speak again—speak."

He stood up. Not abruptly. Not fleeing. Simply because the conversation had ended. "Thank you for listening," he said.

Tamara didn't answer. But she nodded.

When he was gone, the silence remained. A different kind of silence than before. Not one that swallowed—more like one that left space.

Berivan sat down beside her. "How are you?"

Tamara thought for a long time. Then she said: "I don't know. But I think... I've understood something."

"What?"

Tamara looked at her hands. "That pain is not a possession. And that I am not the only one who carries it."

Berivan smiled. A warm, tired, genuine smile.

"That is a beginning."

And for the first time in a long while, Tamara felt that a beginning was possible.

## **8 – The Return to Humanity**

Winter arrived softly.

It laid itself over Berlin like a thin veil, muffling sounds and bathing the streets in a pale light. For most people, it was just a season. For Tamara, it was a transition.

Something in her had shifted.

Not much.

Only a millimeter. But sometimes a millimeter is enough to change a direction.

Since the conversation with Soran, the silence within her had become something else. No longer the silence of an abyss, but the silence of a room slowly catching its breath again.

She began to get up in the morning before Beriwan left for work. She sat at the kitchen table, drank tea, sometimes even a sip of coffee. She opened the window, letting the cold air in, as if to check whether the world still existed.

Beriwan noticed.

She said nothing, but her gaze grew softer.

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One evening, as they sat together on the sofa, Tamara spoke of her family for the first time.

Not much.

Only a single sentence.

"My brother wanted to come to Berlin," she said.

Her voice was steady, but her hands trembled slightly.

Beriwan looked at her.

"Really?"

Tamara nodded.

"He wanted to study political science. Like me. He said Berlin was... free."

She laughed softly.

A laugh that carried more pain than humor.

"I don't know if he would have been right."

Berivan placed her hand on Tamara's.  
"Perhaps not. But he would have had you."

Tamara closed her eyes.  
It was not crying.  
It was a letting go—a breath that had taken months to finally  
release.

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In the following weeks, she began to speak again.  
Not much.  
Not about everything.  
But enough to show she was still there.

She spoke of her childhood in the kibbutz.  
Of the evenings by the fire.  
Of the sirens that tore them from sleep.  
Of the days when she thought the world was small and safe.

Berivan listened.  
Not as a psychologist.  
Not as a friend.  
But as someone who knew what it meant when history  
destroys a home.

There were moments when her thoughts had a sharpness that  
frightened her.

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One morning, as the sky over Kreuzberg was gray as wet  
concrete, Tamara said: "I think I don't want to hate  
anymore."

The sentence was so quiet it almost vanished in the rush of  
the street.

But Beriwan heard it.  
She heard it like a heartbeat.

"You don't have to forgive immediately," she said. "But you don't have to lose yourself."

Tamara nodded.  
"I know. I... I thought for a long time that revenge would heal me. But it only hurt me further."

She looked out the window.  
A bicycle passed, a dog barked, a child laughed.  
The world moved on without asking her.

"I have no one left in Israel," she said.  
"Only a few friends. But no family. No roots."

Beriwan put an arm around her.  
"You have me."

Tamara leaned her head against Beriwan's shoulder.  
It was not a dramatic moment.  
No turning point that changed the world.  
It was only closeness.  
True, simple closeness.

And sometimes, that is enough.

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In the following weeks, Tamara began to live again.  
Slowly.  
Hesitantly.  
Like someone opening their eyes after a long darkness,  
blinded by the light.

She went for walks.

She read a book.

She wrote a few lines in a notebook she hadn't touched for months.

She thought about politics.

About Israel.

About Palestine.

About the two-state solution, which for many was a political concept—

but for her, it was a symbol that two truths can exist side by side without destroying one another.

She knew she was traumatized.

That she would never be the same again.

But she also knew she did not want to remain in the darkness.

And that was the beginning.

---

Berlin rushed on.

The city did not care for the healing of a single woman.

But in Zossener Straße, in an apartment in an old building with creaking floorboards and a crooked lamp, a new chapter began.

Not loudly.

Not heroically.

But quietly.

As quiet as a breath that, after a long time, is finally free.

## Epilogue

Spring did not come suddenly.

It arrived in small signs: a mild wind blowing through the streets, a light that lingered longer, a bird perched on the windowsill as if it had forgotten that Berlin was no place for levity.

Tamara stood by the Landwehr Canal and watched the water. It moved slowly, carrying leaves, reflections, small fragments of the city.

She liked this water.

It was never clear, never calm, never perfect—but it kept flowing.

Beside her stood Beriwan, hands in her coat pockets, her gaze fixed on the same point.

"You're quiet," she said.

"I'm just listening," Tamara replied.

"To whom?"

Tamara smiled faintly.

"To the world. To myself. I don't know."

A bicycle passed.

A dog barked.

A child laughed somewhere behind them.

Life had not become louder—but Tamara could hear it again.

"Sometimes I think," she said after a while, "that I have two lives. The one before. And the one after."

"And which one is this?" Beriwan asked.

Tamara looked at her hands, which looked almost steady in the late afternoon light.

"Perhaps the one in between."

Berivan nodded.

"That is a good place. In-between spaces are honest."

They stood there in silence for a while.

Not out of awkwardness, but out of intimacy.

The kind of silence that only exists between people who have seen one another without needing to explain everything.

"Do you believe it gets better?" Tamara finally asked.

Berivan thought for a moment.

"I believe it becomes different. And sometimes, that is enough."

Tamara took a deep breath.

The air smelled of water, of earth, of something new that did not yet have a name.

"I'm afraid," she said.

"I know," Berivan replied. "But you keep walking anyway. That is courage."

Tamara looked at her. In Berivan's eyes, there was no pity, no expectation—only a silent promise that did not need to be voiced.

"Thank you," Tamara whispered.

"For what?"

"For staying."

Berivan smiled. "I'm staying."

The wind brushed over the canal. A leaf detached itself from the bank and drifted slowly away. Tamara followed it with her eyes. It was only a leaf. And yet, it was a sign. Not of healing. Not of forgetting. But of movement. Of the possibility that even things that are heavy can be carried forward.

She closed her eyes for a moment. When she opened them again, the world was the same—but it felt a little lighter. Not much. Only a millimeter.

But sometimes, a millimeter is enough to keep going.

## Afterword

This story began not with an act, but with a loss.

On October 7, 2023, Tamara lost her parents, her eighteen-year-old brother, her relatives, and many friends in the Hamas attack. It began with a young woman standing in a foreign city, realizing that the world she knew no longer existed. It began with a friendship that was not sought, but found. And with voices that reached her from different directions, yet carried the same pain within them.

Tamara is no hero. Nor is she a perpetrator in the traditional sense. She is a human being who tried to find a foothold in a

world full of fractures. And sometimes, that attempt leads into the darkness.

Yet even in the darkness, there are encounters that change everything. A Kurdish man who tells of his own loss. A friend who stays when everything else leaves. A city that, despite its hardness, opens spaces where people can listen to one another.

In this narrative, much remains unsaid—not out of forgetfulness, but out of concentration. The everyday lives of the characters recede because the story takes place in a state where the ordinary has lost its grip. Tamara's isolation and Beriwan's rare excursions appear only as shadows, for their lives during this time were not governed by routines, but by the attempt to simply keep breathing. The gaps belong to this world; they mark that which falls out of view in moments of deepest upheaval.

This novella does not tell of revenge.  
It tells of what remains after revenge—  
of the void it fails to fill,  
of the guilt it fails to erase,  
of the question of whether a person may lose themselves to  
find something that was lost long ago.

It tells of the possibility that healing does not mean  
everything becomes right again.  
It means that something within us becomes soft once more,  
that we breathe again,  
that we listen again,  
that we feel again.

Perhaps that is the quiet hope of this story:

that even where pain and rage are locked together, a path exists that leads not backward, but forward.

A path that does not forget, but also does not destroy.

A path that is not loud, but remains.

Tamara will never rid herself of her past.

Berivan will carry her own story forward.

Soran will have to live with his memories.

Yet they have all found something larger than their wounds: the realization that humanity does not consist of being unscathed, but of moving forward despite the scars.

And perhaps that is enough.

For now.

For tomorrow.

For a life that is not whole, but possible.

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