



How I Learned to Live Again

I was a very shy and timid girl.

I was afraid of people, afraid of speaking, and most of all, afraid of being judged.

For a long time, I felt as if I had come into this world by mistake. I felt like I didn't belong anywhere. I often thought that maybe I was just a burden to everyone around me.

I always felt different.

There were so many people around me, yet I somehow felt completely alone.

The strange thing was that I never actually wanted to be alone. I wanted someone too.

Someone I could sit with during lunch, someone I could talk to without thinking a hundred times before saying something, someone who would notice when I was quiet and ask me what was wrong.

But I was too afraid to reach out.

I always thought people wouldn't like me. I thought that if I told someone about my problems, they would laugh at me or make fun of me.

So I stopped trying.

I didn't just stop sharing my problems. I stopped talking to people.

At school, I was always alone.

During breaks, everyone would gather around their friends. Some would laugh, some would share their food, and some would talk about things that seemed so important to them.

I would sit somewhere quietly and pretend that I didn't care.

But I did.

I cared a lot.

Sometimes I would look at everyone and think, "Why does everyone have someone except me?"

I kept hoping that someday, someone would come into my life.

Someone who would choose to stay.

Someone who would make me feel like I belonged somewhere.

So I waited.

I waited for years.

Then came my last day of school.

Everyone around me was emotional. People were hugging their friends, taking pictures, promising to stay in touch and trying not to cry.

I watched them quietly.

Everyone had someone to say goodbye to.



I didn't.
For everyone else, it was a day they would remember for the rest of their lives.
For me, it felt like just another ordinary day.
After the farewell, I left.
On the way, one thought kept coming back to me: "The person I waited for all these years never came. What was the point of waiting?"
It was around eight at night, but I hadn't gone home yet. I was sitting in a small restaurant, eating a cupcake.
Suddenly, I heard shouting outside.
"Run! Run!"
I looked up.
People were running past the restaurant.
At first, I couldn't understand what was happening.
Then I heard someone shout, "The flood is coming! The water is coming this way!"
My home was in that direction.
Immediately, I thought of my mother, my father, and my brother.
"Are they safe?"
I rushed outside and started looking through the crowd.
There were people everywhere.
Everyone was running.
Everyone was trying to save themselves.
And I was standing there, desperately searching for the three faces I knew better than anyone.
I couldn't find them.
The water was getting closer.
My fear grew with every passing second.
Then I saw my neighbour.
He saw me too.
Without wasting a second, he grabbed my hand.
"Come on! We have to go!"
He started running, pulling me with him.
I ran as fast as I could.
I could hear people shouting behind us. My breathing became heavy, my legs started hurting, but I didn't stop.
I didn't even know where we were going.



I only knew that the water was behind us.
Then we saw a mountain.
We started climbing.
I tried to climb as quickly as I could, but my legs were shaking. I couldn't get any higher.
For a moment, I thought I was going to fall.
Then he reached back, grabbed my hand and pulled me up.
I finally reached the top.
I turned around.
The water was there.
So close.
I stood frozen, staring at it.
I couldn't believe that a few seconds earlier, I had been sitting in a restaurant eating a cupcake.
And now I was standing on a mountain, watching everything I knew disappear beneath floodwater.
I couldn't stop thinking about my family.
I looked at my neighbour and asked, "Where is my family?"
He didn't answer immediately.
Then he quietly said, "I don't know."
I could see the same fear in his eyes.
He didn't know where his own parents were either.
There were five or six other people on the mountain.
None of us really knew each other.
We were all just people who had somehow managed to escape.
My neighbour was the only person there whom I recognized.
I had seen him countless times before because he lived next to us.
But we had barely spoken.
It was strange.
I had spent years feeling like I had no one, while someone who lived right beside me had always been there.
That night, we finally talked.
Not because we suddenly became friends.
We just needed someone to talk to.
He asked, "Are you okay?"
I nodded, even though I wasn't.



Then I asked him about his parents.
He shook his head.
Neither of us knew anything.
By then, it was around ten at night.
The cold had become unbearable.
I hadn't eaten anything since morning. Even the cupcake I had ordered earlier was still unfinished.
My stomach hurt from hunger, but I hardly noticed.
My mind was somewhere else.
I kept imagining my family running through the crowd.
I kept wondering if they had found somewhere safe.
Every few minutes, I would look down the mountain, hoping to see someone coming.
But nobody came.
That night felt endless.
The wind was cold.
The sky was dark.
The sound of the water below never stopped.
Nobody slept properly.
Everyone was thinking about someone they loved.
I quietly told myself again and again, "They are safe. They have to be safe."
I didn't know whether I truly believed it.
Maybe I was just trying to keep myself from falling apart.
Morning finally came.
But it didn't bring the relief I had expected.
The world below looked completely different.
The roads were gone.
The houses were surrounded by water.
Everything looked unfamiliar.
After some time, we heard a helicopter.
Everyone looked up.
For the first time, we felt a little hope.
But rescue wasn't immediate.
We had to wait.
One day passed.



Then another.
And another.
We stayed on that mountain for almost a week.
Those seven days were difficult.
We were hungry. We were tired. We were worried about our families, and every day we wondered whether help would come.
There was a fruit tree nearby.
We survived on the fruits from it.
Someone would pick them.
Someone would divide them among everyone.
And then we would sit together and eat.
It was such a small thing, but somehow it made us feel less helpless.
Slowly, something unexpected happened.
We started talking.
At first, it was only about food, water and rescue.
Then we started talking about our homes.
Our families.
Our lives.
Our memories.
Someone would tell a funny story from their childhood, and everyone would laugh.
Sometimes someone would become quiet because they were missing their family, and the rest of us would simply sit beside them.
No one needed to explain how they felt.
We all understood.
We had arrived on that mountain as strangers.
But day by day, we became something more.
We started caring about one another.
Someone would ask, "Did you eat?"
Someone would save a fruit for someone else.
Someone would sit beside a person who looked upset.
Without realizing it, we had become like a family.
And something inside me began to change.
I started talking more.
I started laughing.



I started sharing things about myself.
I even started conversations instead of waiting for someone else to speak first.
And the strangest part was...
I wasn't scared.
I wasn't thinking about whether they would judge me.
I wasn't wondering whether they liked me.
I was simply talking.
One evening, we were all sitting together near the fruit tree.
The sun was slowly disappearing behind the mountains.
We were still waiting for rescue.
I looked around at everyone.
A week ago, I hadn't known any of them.
Now, seeing them sitting around me felt strangely comforting.
And suddenly, I thought about my old life.
All those years, I had told myself that my life was boring.
That nobody liked me.
That I had no one.
That I was different from everyone else.
But sitting there, surrounded by people I had met only a few days ago, I finally understood something.
"My life was never boring."
"I had made it boring."
I had kept myself away from people because I was afraid.
I had waited for someone to come into my life, but I had never tried to step into someone else's.
I had wanted people to understand me, but I had never given them the chance to know me.
I had spent so much time waiting for someone to save me from my loneliness that I had forgotten that I could take the first step myself.
That week on the mountain taught me something I had never understood before:
People don't always come into our lives in the way we expect.
Sometimes, they are already around us.
Sometimes, all we have to do is talk.
Sometimes, all we need is the courage to say "Hi."
I looked at the people sitting around me.
They were still strangers in many ways.



But they no longer felt like strangers.
For the first time in my life, I wasn't waiting for someone to come and make me feel less alone.
I didn't need to wait anymore.
I had finally learned to open the door myself.
The flood had taken away many things from us.
But it had also given me something I had never had before.
The courage to live.
And that evening, on that mountain, I finally understood—
“Sometimes our life isn't boring.
We are just too afraid to live it.”
And perhaps...
“that was the day I learned to live.”

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