

Parable about Forgiveness



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- I shall not forgive, - She said. – I shall remember.
- Please, forgive, - the Angel asked. – Forgive, and you will feel easier.
- No way, - She pursed her lips stubbornly. – This shall not be forgiven. Never.
- Will you revenge? – asked he with a great concern.
- No, I shall not revenge. I am above that.
- Are you craving for severe punishment?
- I don't know what punishment would deem sufficient.
- Everyone has to pay for their own decisions. Sooner or later, but everyone... - the Angel said quietly. – It is unavoidable.
- Yes, I know.
- Then forgive! Take this burden off you. Now you are far away from your offenders.
- No. I cannot. And I don't want to. They have no forgiveness.
- Ok, this is up to you, - Angel sighed. – Where are you going to harbor your grudges?
- Here and here, - She touched her head and heart.
- Please, be careful, - the Angel asked. – The venom of resentment is very dangerous. It may sink as a rock, and pull to the bottom. It may spark a flame of rage that burns everything alive.
- This is a Gravestone of Remembrance and a Noble Rage, - She interrupted him. – They are on my side.

And the grudges settled where she said – in the head and heart.



She was young and healthy, she was building her life. Hot blood was flowing in her veins, and her lungs eagerly breathed the air of freedom. She got married, gave birth to children, and acquainted friends. Inevitably sometimes she took offense at them, though mostly forgave them. Sometimes she got angry and quarreled, then they forgave her. She was in different situations, and tried not to recall her resentment.

Many years have passed before she heard this dreaded word – “forgive”.

- I was betrayed by my husband. I face disagreements with my children all the time. Money does not like me. What shall I do? – She asked a middle-aged psychologist.

He listened with great attention, clarified many details, and for some reason kept asking her to tell about her childhood. She was getting angry and tried shifting the conversation back to present, but he kept returning her to her childhood. He seemed to wander through the far corners of her memory, trying to glean and reveal that grudge from the past. She was unwilling and resisted. Still he caught it, what a meticulous nerd!

- **You need cleansing, - he summarized. – Your grudges have spread. Later resentments have stuck to them like polyps accumulate on a coral reef. This reef has become the obstacle in the flow of life energy. This is causing both your problems in personal life and your financial difficulties. This reef has sharp edges, which are wounding your tender soul. Various emotions have settled and confused inside this reef. They are poisoning your blood with metabolites, and hence attracting more new colonists.**
- Yes, I feel something like that too, - the woman nodded. – From time to time I feel nervous, occasionally depression crushes me, and once in a while I just want to kill everyone. So, I have to cleanse. How do I do that?
- Forgive that first, main offence, - the psychologist advised. – With no foundation, the reef will crumble.
- No way! – the woman jumped up. – That grudge is just. That is my true story! I have the right to grudge!
- Do you want to be right or happy? – the psychologist asked. But the woman did not answer, she simply stood up and left, carrying her coral reef with her.

Few more years have passed. The woman was seeing a doctor again, now a primary care physician. The doctor was examining the x-rays, flipping through test results, frowning and chewing his lips.

- Doctor, why are you silent? – she could not keep silence anymore.
- Do you have relatives? – asked the doctor.
- My parents passed away. I divorced my husband. I have children and grandkids. But why do you need my relatives?
- You see, you have a tumor. Right here, - and the doctor pointed to the x-ray of the skull where she had the tumor. – According to your tests, the tumor is malignant. That explains your recurring headaches, insomnia and fatigue. Worst yet is that this neoplasm trends to grow rapidly. The tumor is expanding, and that is bad.
- So what now, am I facing surgery? – she asked, feeling cold feet from apprehension.
- Oh no, - and the doctor frowned even more. - Here are your ECGs for the last year. Your heart is quite weak. It seems as if it's clamped from everywhere and unable to function to its full capacity. It might not survive the surgery. Hence we need to take care of your heart first, and then...

He did not finish, but the woman realized that “then” might never come. Either the heart will break, or the tumor will crush.

- By the way, your blood tests are not that great either. Low hemoglobin, high leucocytes... I will write you a prescription, - the doctor said. – And you too need to help yourself. You need to bring your body into a better order, and at the same time prepare your mind for the surgery.
- But how?

- Positive emotions, heartfelt relationships, contact with relatives. Fall in love, for God's sake! Flip through your picture albums, recall your happy childhood.

The woman just grinned wryly.

- Try to forgive everyone, especially your parents, - the doctor advised suddenly. – That can ease your soul a great deal. I had cases in my practice when forgiveness worked wonders.
- Oh really? – The woman asked ironically.
- Imagine so. There are many auxiliary instruments in medicine. Quality nursing, for example,...Thoughtful care. Forgiveness too can become a medicine, and it is free, no prescription required.

To forgive. Or to die. To forgive or to die? To die, but to never forgive? When choice becomes a matter of life and death, you just need to decide which way to turn.

The head was aching. The heart was full of dull pain. “Where are you going to harbor your grudges?”. “Here and here”. Now it was hurting there. Perhaps, the grudges have grown too much, and they craved more. They contrived to dislodge their hostess, and repossess her entire body. Stupid grudges did not realize that the body will not survive, it will die.

She recalled her main offenders – those, from her childhood. Father and mother, who all the time either worked or quarreled. They did not love her the way she wanted. Nothing seemed to help: neither top grades, nor honor roll letters, nor obedience of their demands; neither protest, nor rebellion. And then they parted, and each started a new family, with no place left for her. At the age of sixteen, she was sent to a state-paid college, in another town, handed down a ticket, a suitcase with her clothes, and three thousand dollars for initial expenses. That was it – since that moment, she became independent and decided: “I shall never forgive!” She carried those grudges inside through her life, she swore that the grudges will die with her, and it seems to be turning true.



But she had children, grandkids, and a widower Sergei – her colleague, who was awkwardly trying to court her, and she did not want to die. Indeed – it was too early for her to die! “I need to forgive, - she resolved. – At least I need to try”.

- **Parents, I am forgiving you everything, - she said unsurely. The words sounded miserable and unconvincing. Then she took a paper and a pencil and wrote: “Dear parents! I am not angry anymore. I forgive you everything”**

Her mouth turned bitter, her heart contracted, and her head ached even more. Relentlessly, gripping the pencil ever more tightly, she kept on writing: “I am forgiving you. I am forgiving you.”. She felt no relief, just more frustration.

- That is not the way, – the Angel whispered. – The river flows always in one direction. They are senior, you are junior. They were before, you are after. You did not give birth to them, rather they gave birth to you. They presented you the opportunity to come to this world. Hence, be grateful!
- I am grateful, - the woman pronounced. – And I indeed really want to forgive them.
- Children have no right to judge their parents. Parents are not forgiven. They are asked for forgiveness.

- Forgiveness for what? – she asked. – What wrong have I done to them?
- You did wrong to yourself. Why did you harbor those grudges? What is your head aching about? What rock are you carrying in your chest? What poisons your blood? Why doesn't your life flow like a deep river, rather trickle with rickety creeks. Do you want to be right or healthy?
- I can't believe it's all because of resentment of my parents. Did those grudges destroy me, really?
- I warned you, - the Angel reminded. – Angels always warn: do not accumulate, do not carry, do not muck yourself with grudges. They rot, stink and poison everything alive around them. We warn! If a person makes a choice in favor of resentment, we have no right to interfere. If they choose forgiveness – we have to help.
- **Would I still be able to break that coral reef? Or is it too late?**
- **It is never too late to try, - the angel said softly.**
- **But they have died a long time ago! Whom should I ask for forgiveness? What should I do?**
- **Go ahead and ask. They will hear. Or maybe they will not hear. In the end, you are doing it not for them, rather for yourself.**
- **Dear parents, - she began. – Please, forgive me for all my wrongs. Please, forgive me everything.**

She spoke for some time, then quieted down and listened to herself. No wonders – the heart is still full of dull pain, the head still aches, there are no special feelings, and everything is as usual.

- I don't believe myself, - she confessed. – So many years have passed...
- Try another way, - the Angel advised. – Imagine yourself as a child again.
- How?
- Go down on your knees and address them as in your childhood: mom, dad.

The woman hesitated a little and knelt. She put her hands together in a boat shape, looked up and pronounced: "Mom. Dad." Then once again: "Mom. Dad." Her eyes opened widely and started to fill with tears. "Mom. Dad... this is me, your daughter... please, forgive me... forgive me!" Her chest was shaking from sobbing, then her tears gushed in a flooding stream. Yet she was repeating once and again: "Forgive me. Please, forgive me. I had no right to judge you. Mom, dad..."

It took a while before the tear streams dried up. Exhausted, she was sitting right on the floor, leaning onto a couch.

- How are you? – the Angel asked.
- I don't know. I cannot tell. I seem to feel empty, - she answered.
- Repeat this daily for forty days, - the Angel said. – As a treatment course. As a chemotherapy. Or, if you like, as a replacement for chemotherapy.
- Yes, sure. Forty days. Will do.

Something was throbbing in her chest, tingling with needles and rolling with hot waves. Perhaps those were the debris from the reef. For the first time in a long while, her head did not ache about nothing at all.

