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## Forgive Me, Gaza...



Image by Mohammed Ibrahim.

I write *forgive me*, not *forgive us*, because this guilt is deeply personal. It's a burden I carry in the comfort of my home, sipping clean water while the children of Gaza drink from brine water wells mixed in sewage—their small bodies wracked with dehydration and disease—if they even find water at all.

I can pluck wild mallow leaves from my backyard—not to satisfy hunger, but for the luxury of a healthy diet. I'm guilty of throwing away leftovers, when fathers and mothers in Gaza search through the rubble of demolished homes for a can of food that might have survived an Israeli bomb. Or they dare crawling through cratered fields, scavenging for wild greens to silence their children's growling stomachs—only to become moving targets under the cold gaze of Israeli drones.

Forgive me—I have a home, a heater and blankets to keep my children warm. While in Gaza, parents lie awake—not just from the cold, but from the torment of being unable to warm their children’s tiny, freezing feet.

Forgive me when I kiss my daughter on her birthday and her laughter rings in my ears—while only the buzzing of Israeli drones rings in yours. She blows out her candles in a breath of joy, while you light a candle to push back the darkness, wheezing for air in a world that denies you breath.

I can hold my daughter, while you can’t even retrieve yours from beneath the rubble—can’t gather enough of her remains for one final embrace. American-made Israeli bombs scattered her flesh like sand in the wind, leaving you empty, aching with grief and dust.

Your hospitals, doctors, medics, and first responders who chose their professions to save lives—but became targets, because saving a Palestinian life is deemed existential threat for Israel. I beg forgiveness from every journalist whose words to expose war crimes became bullets, and whose cameras were more dangerous to Israel than cannons.

Forgive the world that calls your starvation, the destruction of schools and universities—and the murder of your educators—Israel’s “self-defense.”

Dear people of Gaza, forgive them if you once believed humanity had learned from the sins of African enslavement, the genocide of Indigenous peoples, and the European Holocaust. I repent, Gaza, if you believed that “Never Again” included you.

I’m sorry that the progeny of the victims of “Never Again” have organized under the agency of ADL, AIPAC, and Political Zionism to *kosher* a genocide—carried out in the name of Judaism. “Never Again” is not for everyone, dear Gaza; it is only for the white West and the self-chosen.

The ideological antisemites are now Israel’s closest allies. Today, “antisemite” no longer means those who hate Jews, but it is those who protest Israeli genocide. “Never Again” is monopolized by the professional victims—licensed by a god using past European cruelty to justify present Israeli injustice in Palestine.

I’m sorry, Gaza, the Palestinian Authority (PA) has betrayed you. Instead of shielding you, it became an arm of your oppressor. When the refugee camps of Jenin, Nur Shams, and Balata rose to support you, they faced not just Israeli force, but PA bullets and batons. And in cities and towns that didn’t rebel, the PA still failed to protect them from Jewish settler rampages—burning homes and groves, killing livestock, and shooting farmers.

Forgive me, Gaza, for believing in the illusion of Arab unity—that you were part of a greater Arab nation. That the rulers of Cairo, Amman, Damascus, Baghdad, Riyadh, and others

would rise for you. I believed we shared a common pain, a common struggle. I believed the Arab world would never let you starve. I was wrong.

Instead, they became part of your siege. Rafah is sealed not only by Israeli soldiers but by Egyptian concrete walls and watchtowers. Arab dictators shake hands with those who bomb your hospitals. Rulers from the rich Arab Gulf buy Israeli technology—tested first on your neighborhoods.

Forgive me, Gaza, for believing the rulers who betrayed Palestine in 1948 would ever defend you. Like their ancestors who opened the gates to the Crusaders 900 years ago—trading Palestinian blood for their survival—they do so again today.

History repeats itself, Gaza. The same kings and emirs who welcomed invaders then, embrace Israel now—gorging themselves on roasted camels while your children wither from hunger. Their capitals glow with the lights of music festival, while Gaza's nights are set ablaze by the flares of American-made 2,000-pound bombs.

To the Arab tyrants who still bow to their colonial masters, I say: the European Crusaders did not spare your ancestors once they conquered Palestine. They turned their swords on the very rulers who helped them, devouring their mini kingdoms one by one.

I'm sorry, Gaza, that when the people of Yemen stood for you—blocking shipments to an Israeli port to demand food for your children—their own children were murdered in an Israeli-American proxy war. Like yours, their suffering is silent, and their pain earns no headlines.

Forgive me that only the Lebanese Resistance—unyielding under Israeli bombardment—steadfast, while other Arabs profited from your agony. Yemen and the Lebanese Resistance sought not applause, but to let you know you are not alone. Though the Arab world and much of humanity turned their backs, they did not waver. Yemen and the Lebanese Resistance traded neither dignity nor principle with the forces of evil.

Gaza, your blood is a mirror the world dares not face. But I will not look away.

*Forgive me for my helplessness.*

*Forgive me for every sip of water, every bite of food, every breath I take while you suffocate.*

*Forgive me, if those I met in Gaza years ago ever thought I'd forgotten them.*

*Forgive me if I couldn't help everyone who asked.*

*Forgive my comfort.*

*Forgive my peace.*

*I seek not your absolution—*

*Only that you know:*

***You are not forgotten.***

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