

GARY ADAM

DARK EPISTLE



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- **Brief chapters: about 1 to 4 book pages (for example in modern, easy to read biographies or autobiographical novels)**

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Foreword

This book is based on personal experiences that have deeply imprinted themselves on my life. It tells of an encounter that shaped me, changed me, and ultimately made me into a person who now lives more consciously, thinks more reflectively, and feels more clearly.

It is the story of a chapter in a relationship that began with hope, continued with pain, and ended with insight. An experience that touched me deeply emotionally, pushed me to my limits, and still opened doors to a new understanding of myself.

I decided to share my story not to assign blame, but to raise awareness. To show how emotionally manipulative behavior often enters our lives unnoticed. How it initially disguises itself as affection, wraps itself in promises, and ultimately reveals itself as silent control. This book aims to sensitize people. People who might themselves be stuck in a situation they see no way out of. People who sense that something is wrong but cannot find the words for it.

I dedicate these lines to all who have been hurt but found the courage to move forward. To all who want to find themselves again. To all who are ready to face themselves, even if it hurts.

Chapter 1: The Root of the Fighter

Before I take you into the time that broke my inner self, I want to briefly tell how it even came about that I learned to fight. Not just in the figurative sense, but quite literally.

Even as a child, martial arts was more than just a sport or a hobby for me. It became a true passion. I started early with Kung Fu. I dedicated myself to this art with full effort and real discipline. Not because I had to, but because I deeply felt that I would find my true strength in it. That was my base, my foundation.

But the decisive step came in 2018 when I discovered boxing for myself. It was not just an extension of my skills but a challenge that brought me to a new level. I had the great fortune to have someone like Hartmut Fröhlich by my side. A man who was more than just a coach. Hartmut was a mentor, a living legend from another time and a representative of the very tough old school.

Even before I really started boxing in 2018, he had already shaped me physically and mentally. His goal was not only to teach technique but to make me physically athletic and mentally unyielding. The training with him was anything but comfortable. No modern equipment, no air conditioned room, but real rough and honest training, just the way it has to be.

Hartmut is a man of the old school who was himself a boxer and who still lives every day as if it were a fight. No luxury, no high tech, just hard work, simple means and a whole lot of heart. His training was rural, rustic, but for that very reason authentic and effective.

I remember exactly the nights in which we trained in his garden, often deep into the night when most people were long asleep. Sometimes until one, sometimes even until two in the morning. While others slept, endurance, discipline and mental strength grew in me. And all that without comfort and modern conveniences.

One exercise that remained especially in my memory was running across the yard with bricks. Hartmut challenged me by having me run across his yard holding four bricks in my hands without touching the ground. I was only allowed to place the bricks on the existing bricks. The yard became a demanding course that challenged not only the body but also the mind. It was

about balance, concentration and mental control. For me it was more than training, it was a lesson that still accompanies me to this day.

Besides this hard training we used all available tools like old car tires, garden hoses and more to improve coordination, speed and accuracy. It was no walk in the park. Mistakes hurt, not only physically but also because they had consequences. There was no show, no hiding, only honest work.

Hartmut was for me like a grandfather I never had, a quiet strong man who taught me not only techniques but also values that are more important today than ever. Respect, endurance, honesty and perseverance. I learned a lot from him and he shapes me to this day in every fiber.

These years were more than just training. They shaped me, not only physically but above all internally. I learned that pain is not an end but the beginning of growth. Discipline is not an empty phrase but an attitude that burns deep within me. Without this foundation I would have broken from what came afterward. But I became stronger, wiser, more confident, just as I am today.

Chapter 2: The Beginning of the End

End of the year two thousand twenty the world was in a state that no one could have foreseen. Streets were empty, doors locked, and the familiar noise of everyday life was replaced by a oppressive silence. Uncertainty was ubiquitous. Every new day brought new rules, new numbers, new fears. It was a time when everything somehow had come to a standstill and yet it felt like something inside was starting to move. Something that one could not immediately grasp. I – Gary Adam – was at that time alone. Not only in the literal sense, but in a deeper, spiritual way.

My apartment was quieter than ever before. Outside hardly any car passed by. The world was in standby mode. And me? I sat in my living room and stared at my phone. Hour after hour, day after day. I was not waiting for a specific message. I was waiting for something. Maybe for a sign. Maybe for someone. Or simply for a feeling that would make me feel alive again.

In such moments the longing for closeness grows. For a person who looks at you and truly sees you. Not just an image on a screen, not just a name in a list of contacts. I wanted to feel real life. Warmth. Humanity. And so I scrolled through a dating app. Not out of boredom, but out of a quiet hope. Maybe out there is someone who feels the same. Someone who in this crazy time is also seeking connection.

And then there was suddenly that profile. A name, a smile, a look that promised more than just small talk. Narziska.

At first glance she looked like what I had always wished for. Her eyes seemed to shine as if they were looking into another world. One that was warmer than my reality. Her presence was magnetic. Elegant and yet grounded. Confident but not arrogant. Her voice – when we first spoke on the phone – was soft, almost melodic. It was a voice in which you could lose yourself. And her laughter? That laughter had a lightness I had long forgotten. It was as if I had found a person who carried a piece of sun into this dark time.

Of course I did not know who she really was. But who knows that at the beginning? Everyone first shows only their best sides. But what I did not recognize then was that with her not only the best sides were in the foreground but a carefully built image. A mask. A facade so convincing that I did not even consider questioning it.

Our first meeting was not spectacular. No candlelight dinner, no walk under the stars. It was a completely normal evening at my then best friend Janik. A double date. Narziska brought her friend Julia, I was with Janik there. We cooked together, laughed a lot. Everything felt effortless. Almost too easy. As if we had all known each other forever.

That evening something happened inside me. I felt a kind of awakening. As if something inside me stirred, had slept for a long time and now opened its eyes. I saw in her a possibility. A door. A future in which I was no longer alone. In which I could share my days with someone, my thoughts, my energy. She mirrored me in a way that made me believe she would understand me. Maybe even save me.

During the conversation I learned that she had a small son. She spoke about him with a tenderness that touched me deeply. There was pride in her voice but also something soft, vulnerable. I did not see that child as an obstacle. On the contrary. I saw it as part of her as something that made her even more real. I felt respect. Admiration. She seemed strong. Like a woman who had been through a lot and still stood. Or maybe precisely for that reason.

I remember clearly how she disappeared into the kitchen for a moment that evening. I thought this could become something. Not just an encounter, not just an affair, but maybe a home. I was ready. Ready to open myself. Ready to take responsibility. Ready to love.

But there is a dangerous kind of hope. The one that makes you blind. That makes you believe you have arrived even though you have just lost your way. I wanted to believe. So I did. I filtered out what did not fit. I ignored small contradictions. I took her words at face value even though they had no substance because I put the need for connection above everything.

We began to spend more time together. Sometimes at her place, sometimes at mine. At first everything was exciting. New. We cooked together, watched films, talked for hours. And sometimes we just sat silently next to each other and it still felt complete. I met her son. A happy curious child with bright eyes. I slowly built a relationship with him. And with every day it felt more like a small family.

But over time something changed. At first imperceptibly. Little barbs in her words. Uncomprehending reactions to harmless remarks. Sudden mood swings. Sometimes she was full of closeness, then she withdrew without warning without explanation. I tried to understand. I looked for the mistakes in myself. Maybe I had said something wrong? Maybe I had not been attentive enough?

The truth is I did not want to see the truth. I did not want to hear it. I clung to the image I had of her. An image that she had created so perfectly.

There were moments when my gut feeling warned me. Little inner alarms saying: Something is wrong here. But I was a master at drowning out those voices. I told myself that every relationship has its challenges. That love needs patience. That she was worth fighting for. So I fought.

I fought for something that never really was. I gave my heart into hands that were not ready to hold it. I trusted an illusion. And I paid a high price.

Today I know that the beginning of our getting to know each other was also the beginning of my inner breaking. It was not a romantic new beginning. It was the start of a time full of manipulation emotional dependency and painful disillusionment.

But back then in those first weeks I did not see that. I only saw hope. The chance for something real. In a world that felt like a nightmare she was my dream.

And that was the beginning of the end.

Chapter 3: The Illusion of Love

At the beginning it felt almost magical. Narziska was full of charm, she seemed attentive and full of energy. She wrote to me constantly, called me every evening and wanted to spend every free minute with me. For someone like me, who feels deeply and loves faithfully, that was like a gift. It felt as if I had finally found someone who feels the same way I do.

We talked about shared dreams. We talked about a life we would build together. Sometimes even about starting a family someday. Then she introduced me to her son. At the moment I saw him, I felt something inside me. A connection. I was not his father, but I wanted to be someone who is there for him. I took this role seriously. I helped with meals, played with him, read him stories and just sat with him when he watched cartoons. It happened quickly. From a woman's child he became a part of my heart. He became family.

But then something changed. First very quietly.

She wrote less often. Her voice sounded more distant. Sometimes she no longer laughed at my jokes. Her attention was no longer warm but testing. And then the comparisons began. Again and again she mentioned her previous partner. Or friends. Or men from the internet. I remember a moment when I wanted to help her with a small thing in her apartment. She looked at me and said almost casually that her ex had done it faster. It was just one sentence. But it hit deep. Not because of the words themselves but because they came from someone who meant so much to me. Someone to whom I had shown my innermost self.

Then more signs came. Suddenly she always wanted to know where I was. If I did not answer immediately, she was silent for hours. Sometimes even several days. Her affection came only when she wanted something. When she was lonely. Then she suddenly wrote again. Said she missed me. And every time I opened my heart to her anew.

I told myself she had been hurt. That I just had to be more patient. That she simply needed time. I convinced myself love is not easy. That love sometimes hurts.

But deep inside me grew another voice. A voice that said something is wrong.

I began to recognize patterns. She praised me for my strength. And shortly thereafter she said I was boring. She flirted with other men in front of my eyes. When I said something, I was suddenly the jealous one. She turned conversations so skillfully that I began to not trust myself anymore. I doubted my memory. My perception. Myself.

And still I stayed.

Why?

Because I believed I loved her. Or rather, I clung to the image she had shown me at the beginning. To this version of her. I wanted her back. I hoped she would become like that again. But I had not fallen in love with the person. I had fallen in love with an illusion. With an ideal that never really existed.

Admitting that hurt. It meant telling myself: I was deceived.

So I stayed. In hope that everything would get better again.

But the longer I waited, the further away the woman I had seen at the beginning became.

Chapter 4: The First Cracks

There was a moment when everything quietly began to shift. No big fight, no final break, no dramatic end. Just a quiet doubt that crept into my heart. Almost like a breath. A whisper that told me something was no longer right.

It was a Sunday morning. She had asked me to come early to help her with a few small things. I came with a smile, but when I opened the door and entered, there was no smile. No “good morning”. No look welcoming me. Just a silent nod. Her face was expressionless, her voice cold. As if I were a disturbance.

I asked if everything was okay. She did not answer directly but just rolled her eyes and said shortly that she did not feel like talking. No thanks. No word about the gesture. No interest. I swallowed the lump in my throat, forced a smile and said I could make breakfast while she freshened up. She disappeared into the bathroom. And did not come back for an hour.

I sat at the kitchen table. The coffee smelled like closeness but tasted like distance. And I asked myself what I had done wrong.

When she came back she barely looked at me. Her first words were: “Why are you actually always here? Don’t you have anything better to do?” I felt the ground pulled out from under my feet. It was as if someone had muted the sound and showed the world only in pictures. I said calmly that I was there because she had asked me to come.

She shrugged. Said she had changed her mind.

That day something happened inside me. A fine crack. No explosion, no collapse. Just a first small break in the picture I had of us. I stayed. Of course. Because I wanted to believe that it was only a bad day. That she might be overwhelmed or sad. But deep inside me a part of me began to understand.

Later, on another evening, she sat on the sofa and typed on her phone. She smiled. Not a broad laugh but that quiet almost familiar smile I used to know. Only this time it was not meant for me. I glanced over casually, not out of control but out of reflex. When I asked who she was writing to she closed the phone. Without hesitation she said: “That is none of your business.”

I felt trust beginning to crumble inside me. Not all at once but slowly. I wanted to believe her. I wanted to give her space. But how can one be in a relationship and still feel like a guest in the other person’s life?

She no longer introduced me as a partner. She no longer took my hand when we were out. She talked about the future as if I were not planned to be in it. I became someone who sat next to her but no longer belonged to her.

The closeness that was once so warm became routine. Her touches came only when she wanted something. A favor. Attention. Convenience.

And still I stayed.

I told myself that every relationship goes through difficult phases. That sometimes it just gets exhausting. That it can get better again. But in truth I knew that this was not just a phase.

It was the beginning of something else. Something that quietly crept into my soul. A kind of darkness. Not drama but a slow fading.

And the worst thing was not that she changed. The worst thing was that I began to lose myself. I considered every word. I weighed every step. I became quiet. I became cautious. I tried to be a version of myself that does not cause friction. One that stays quiet. One that does not want too much.

What I did not yet realize then was that I had already begun to disappear.

Chapter 5: The Silent Fight

There are battles no one sees. Battles that happen in the quiet moments when no one is watching. This chapter of my life was one of those silent fights, a time when I smiled in front of others but slowly broke inside. Outwardly, everything seemed stable. We were still together. To the outside world, we were a couple like any other. But in reality, I had already become a guest in my own relationship. I felt like a shadow, someone who was merely tolerated, but not truly loved.

She began to drift further away from me. Her phone was constantly in her hand, turned away from me. Conversations got shorter. Plans remained vague. I had become someone she could cancel on without explanation.

Still, I didn't want to give up. I began to question myself more and more. Am I not enough? Am I doing something wrong? I tried harder. I bought small gifts, was more patient, gave her space, complimented her, even when she ignored me. I thought maybe, just maybe, she would realize I was still here, that I was still trying, that I was still fighting for us. But love should never feel like begging.

She started criticizing me more often. My clothes. My plans. Even the way I spoke. It felt like nothing I did was ever good enough. But the more she pushed me, the more I clung to the idea of what we once were. In hindsight, I realize part of me was afraid to be alone. Afraid that if I let go, I would have to admit that the love I once felt had become a quiet pain. And yet, I was already lonely in the relationship.

The irony is, I thought I was strong because I stayed. But true strength would have been to leave. It took me a long time to see that. It was months of internal struggles, unnoticed by anyone else. I often felt like a stranger in my own life. It was as if I were playing a role I no longer believed in. I felt like I had lost my own wishes and needs. Everything revolved around her. Her wellbeing, her moods, her needs.

I tried to find myself. But how do you find yourself when you constantly try to please someone else? When you deny yourself to save a relationship that is already breaking? I felt trapped. Trapped in a web of expectations, guilt, and false hope. I didn't want to be the one who gave up. I wanted to prove I was strong enough to save this relationship. But in doing so, I lost myself more and more.

Every rejection, every sign of disinterest, every cold look hurt deeply inside me. And yet I stayed. I looked for explanations. Maybe she was stressed. Maybe she was just tired. Maybe she needed time. But time passed and nothing changed. On the contrary, it got worse. The closeness we once had faded more and more. It was as if we were on different planets with no connection left between us.

I remember nights lying next to her where we didn't even look at each other. We barely spoke. The silence between us was louder than words. I felt lonely even though she was beside me. That loneliness was the heaviest burden. It ate me up from inside. I started questioning myself. Was I not lovable? Was I not good enough? Why couldn't I win back the love I once felt?

The answer was painful. Sometimes you don't love someone the way you wish anymore. Sometimes love alone is not enough. Sometimes just being there is not enough. Sometimes patience is not enough. Sometimes more is needed. And sometimes what you need is no longer part of the story.

I had to learn to let go. I had to learn to find myself again. I had to realize it wasn't my fault. That love isn't always easy, but it shouldn't be destructive either. That it's okay not to be perfect. That I deserve to be happy. That I deserve to be loved.

This silent fight was my teacher. It showed me how strong I really am. How much pain I can endure. But also how important it is to take care of myself. How important it is to hear my own voice and not just the expectations of others. How important it is to have the courage to stand up for myself.

Today I know I didn't fail. I know I was brave. Brave enough to stay when it was hard. But also brave enough to leave eventually. Because sometimes the greatest act of love is to love yourself and let go.

The chapter of my silent fight is over. I am no longer the man I once was. I am stronger, wiser, and free. And I know I am ready for what comes next. Without fear, without doubt. With an open heart and clear soul.

Chapter 6: The Turning Point

There is a moment in every painful story when something finally breaks. A moment when silence turns into a scream and silently enduring becomes unbearable. For me, that moment came on an evening I will never forget. It was a turning point that changed everything – and one I had avoided for so long because I was not ready to face the truth.

The evening started like many others. I waited for her. Waited for her to come home, to explain why the distance between us had grown so large. I felt like I could no longer close that gap, that we were slowly losing each other – yet I did not want to admit it. I wanted to believe it was just a phase, a low point we could overcome.

Hours passed, and she was not there. No message, no call, no explanation. I sat in the living room, staring at the clock and watching time crash like waves against a rock I could no longer hold together. My heart felt heavy. My thoughts raced. Was she with someone else? Had she stopped caring about me? Or was I long ago just a shadow of her past?

When she finally came through the door sometime after midnight, I had almost given up hope for an explanation or a conversation. Still, I asked calmly, “Where have you been?”

Her reply was colder than I expected. “Outside. What does it matter?”

Those two words hit me like a blow. I felt something inside me break – not suddenly and loudly, but quietly and deeply, as if the ground beneath my feet was dissolving.

I looked at her and said in a calm tone, “It matters because I’m still here. Because it still means something to me. And because every time you come in like that, without a word, it eats away a piece of the little we still have.”

She rolled her eyes and said coldly, “You’re dramatic.”

No apology. No explanation. Just indifference.

That was the moment I realized that the love I felt was no longer enough to hold on to what we had. There was no longer a bridge between us. Only an abyss.

I stood there silently, not because I had no words left, but because I finally understood that it no longer mattered. No matter how much love I still carried inside me, it could not fill the distance that had spread between us like a wall growing higher and higher.

I left the room. Not out of anger, but because I needed to breathe. I needed to feel that I still exist. That I was not completely lost in the shadow of this relationship.

That night I lay awake for a long time staring at the ceiling. My mind raced, my heart shattered into silent fragments. I thought of all the moments we had shared. Of the times we laughed, when we felt safe. But now it all seemed far away, as if it had never truly existed.

It was a painful realization: I had reached the turning point. Not because I stopped loving her, but because I finally accepted that love alone was not enough. That love does not mean giving yourself up or drowning in hope for change.

The days that followed were quieter than ever before. She hardly looked at me. The few words we exchanged sounded mechanical, like strangers forced to share the same space. I felt like a ghost in my own life. And still, I clung to a spark of hope that she would change. That she would remember what we once had.

But change never came.

Instead, I began to change.

I withdrew. Not out of defiance, but for self-protection. I stopped asking about her. I stopped trying to fix things. I stopped sacrificing myself for someone who no longer saw me.

And strangely, in this silence, I began to hear something I had not heard in a long time: my own voice. My own truth. My own pain.

I realized I had not been myself for a long time. That I had smiled when I wanted to cry. That I had been silent when I wanted to scream. That I hoped when I should have walked away.

I stood on the edge of a cliff. Not at an end, but at a beginning.

I knew I had to make a decision. A decision that was not easy, that would cost me my heart. But I also knew that I had to choose myself. That I wanted my own life back.

I began to understand that true strength is not about enduring everything until you break. But about recognizing yourself, loving yourself, and having the courage to let go, even when it hurts.

In the weeks that followed, I learned to focus on myself again. I started doing things that were good for me. I found new hobbies, reconnected with old friends I had neglected. I worked on regaining my self-esteem, bit by bit.

It was not an easy path. There were days when I felt weak. Days when memories of her overwhelmed me. Days when I wondered if I had made the wrong decision.

But I knew I was on this path to find myself again. To be free again. To live, not just survive.

And with each passing day, the burden in my heart grew lighter. The wounds began to heal, even though the scars would remain. Because they told a story – my story.

A story of pain and loss, but also of courage and new beginnings.

I was no longer the man I had been before. I had become stronger, clearer. I now knew my worth and that I deserve to be loved – in a way that does not destroy me but builds me up.

The turning point was not the end. It was the beginning of something new.

I had learned that I must choose myself, even if it means breaking my heart. Because only then can you truly be free and make space for the happiness you deserve.

Chapter7: The Last Storm – Between Closeness and Breaking Apart

Shortly before Narziska ended things with me we experienced a day that put everything to the test once again. It began with a visit to her mother's. The three of us Narziska her child and I set out together. I was really looking forward to finally meeting her mother hoping it would bring us closer. But it was different.

From the start there was constant tension. Between Narziska and her mother heated arguments broke out repeatedly. The atmosphere was tense words sharp and hurtful. Suddenly her mother began crying in the kitchen a scene that made me deeply uncomfortable. Narziska wanted to leave but I tried to calm things down and sat with her mother in the kitchen to talk calmly. But my words fell on deaf ears the wounds were too deep.

When we finally left the apartment her mother slammed the door right in Narziska's face and yelled Get your life together first Those words echoed for a long time.

The drive home was a disaster. I constantly tried to keep spirits up and soothe Narziska but she just nagged. Everything was bad everyone but her was to blame immature unreasonable and hurtful. Only in the evening when we finally got home did I feel my patience wearing thin and was close to getting angry.

But when we entered the apartment she silently sat down on the bed and ignored me. I gently asked if everything was okay or if she wanted to talk. But she remained silent and instead called her best friend who had come over specially. This disappointment made me angry I left the apartment without a word.

Narziska was surprised she had never seen me like that before. We had no contact for a week.

After this break we met again. Her father tried to mediate between us and smooth things over but that's another story.

Bit by bit we found our way back to each other but the relationship was no longer the same.

One evening she invited me out for Chinese food at my favorite restaurant. After dinner she suddenly announced she was pregnant. At first I smiled a moment of hope and joy. But then everything changed. I had a panic attack. I thought of her parents whom I knew well enough and knew they wouldn't be happy about it.

I remembered the evening in the kitchen when I told her No matter what comes I'm staying with you and will get through this with you. I said those words through tears full of fear that our whole world might fall apart.

But she decided to have an abortion. That decision was another heavy blow for both of us one last piece of fragility between us.

After the abortion she completely lost control. She became aggressive and there were nothing but fights to the point where the police were called. I kept trying to save the situation and the relationship but it was hopeless. She had shown her true face.

Chapter 8: The Confrontation – Between Past and New Beginning

Life had brought me into a situation I never could have imagined before. While I was living at Narziska's father's place, it became increasingly clear to me how deeply the dysfunctions in that family were rooted. It wasn't just what I directly experienced, but also the shadows that cast themselves over my life. The narcissistic patterns I had seen in Narziska herself were reflected in her environment – especially in her father. His aggressive behavior, his substance abuse, and his criminal actions were like dark clouds constantly hanging over me, suffocating me, even though deep down I knew I had to free myself from them in order to survive.

And yet, during that time, I discovered something I had hardly dared to hope for: hope. Because I met a woman who was different. Honest, clear in her manner, with a warm closeness that had nothing to do with fear or manipulation. She was not part of that toxic system. She showed me that closeness can also be healthy, that trust does not break if it is properly nurtured. With her, I slowly began to open up again. Cautiously, yes, but with a genuine desire to engage in something new that wasn't broken. A relationship that strengthens me rather than wears me down.

Nevertheless, my everyday life remained shaped by the chaos that Narziska's father radiated. He was a man who repeatedly got involved in criminal activities, for example by stealing expensive items to finance his addiction or power games. I wanted to stay away from that, not to get drawn into conflicts that would only destroy me. But it was hard to keep distance when this family was part of my past that I could not simply ignore. It was like a burden I carried with me, even though I already knew I had to cast it off.

A decisive moment came about a year after the breakup with Narziska. The criminal case against her father had been dropped, and I felt that I had to clear up the last open questions. I wanted to know what really lay behind all of this. I searched for answers, wanted to understand why things had happened the way they did. One of our last meetings took place in a swimming pool. A place that was actually meant for relaxation, offering peace and recovery. But the atmosphere was tense. He was there, but I immediately noticed the smell of alcohol on his skin. It was not a good start.

Her father was no unknown entity. He was a former professional boxer who had achieved great success in the late 90s. Back then, fame surrounded him like a protective cloak. But the golden times were long gone. In the early 2000s, his career had crashed, and since then he had desperately tried to cling to that past glory. He constantly talked about the past, about what he had achieved. But for most, that was just a story from days gone by that nobody really took seriously anymore.

The actual confrontation happened in a private apartment. I still remember that day vividly. He was heavily drunk, maybe also under the influence of other substances. The mood was charged, the air heavy with unspoken hatred and resignation. Suddenly, he became provocative, began insulting and provoking me. Then, without any warning, he threw a surprise punch, hitting me right in the chin.

I was surprised but reacted quickly. Instinctively, I threw myself on him and put him in a chokehold, pressing him to the ground. It was a David versus Goliath fight. He was tall,

heavy, and powerful – 1.97 meters and about 110 kilos. I was significantly smaller at 1.87 meters and weighed barely 60 kilos at the time. Yet I managed to maintain control. His breaths became panicked, he gasped and struggled, but I held on. In that moment, I realized how much power this fight held – not just physically but emotionally. I was wrestling not only with him but also with the history he represented.

While we were on the ground, he suddenly bit my thumb. It was a desperate act, a last attempt to defend himself. Surprisingly, I respected this move. Bruce Lee once said: “If you can no longer defend yourself – bite!” So I attacked his mouth corners and tore them until blood flowed. A brutal, raw encounter between two men whose lives had broken apart on completely different paths.

But that was not the end. The situation got out of control. I became afraid of seriously hurting him. He could barely breathe, and that worried me. I loosened my grip and switched to a ground fighting position where I felt safer, where I could better control the situation. We held each other by the collar, standing face to face, frozen in a stalemate. It was a silent clash, a struggle for control and respect.

I said to him: “I don’t want this anymore. I’m letting go now.” My voice was calm but firm. I hoped he would accept the ceasefire.

He replied: “I don’t trust you anymore.”

I repeated: “Okay, I’m letting go.”

That was my weakness. The moment I let go, he struck my eye with full force. A sharp pain shot through my face, and I knew I would have a black eye. He stood up and desperately tried to hit me. But I had learned to defend myself.

How do you fight a boxer? You take away his ability to use his arms. Thanks to my experience in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, I managed to keep him at a distance. I kicked him deliberately in the groin and gained some breathing space. Under the table, I was in a position that gave me security. He couldn’t reach me. He tried half-hearted kicks, spat at me, shouted insults like “loser” at me. It was like the tantrum of a child who doesn’t get what he wants.

Eventually, he left the apartment. Outside, the police were waiting, already having been alerted. It was a shocking moment. My former father figure, blood-stained, raging like a stubborn child defying the world. He showed the middle finger as if to say he didn’t care about anything.

I thought to myself: Is this supposed to be the great professional boxer he and his daughter always bragged about? The man who once won great fights? It was just sad, disappointing, and at the same time liberating. It finally showed me that I could no longer be trapped in this toxic past. That I had to follow my own path, free from the shadows cast by this man.

This fight was more than just a physical fight. It was the final blow that broke the chains binding me to a past that destroyed me. I knew I had to protect myself, that I had to grow

further so as not to sink. And I was ready to take that path – with all the challenges it would bring.

Because between past and new beginning often lies a hard, painful struggle. But it is precisely this struggle that shapes us, makes us stronger, and shows us who we really are.

Chapter 9 The inner warrior awakens

There is a moment in every life that feels like a silent awakening. A moment when silence becomes louder than noise and the inner voice speaks louder than all the doubts fears and pains that have held you captive for so long. In this moment the soul begins to speak again not with words but with the steady heartbeat of a person who decides to stand up to cast off the burden and walk their own path.

This chapter tells exactly about this moment about the decision to awaken the warrior within oneself. About the process that does not happen overnight but through perseverance through pain and through the absolute will not to be determined by the past.

I did not simply wake up one day feeling strong. Strength was not a sudden gift but an achievement composed of countless small moments. It came in the moments when I kept going even though I felt no strength. It came in the decision to leave old wounds and disappointments behind without denying them by accepting them as part of my story but not as an obstacle to my future.

It began with returning to my training.

Months had passed since I last entered the dojo. During this time I had felt lost stuck in a whirlpool of self doubt and emotional pain. Training had become distant a memory of a time when I had felt strong and alive. Now I stood again before the door smelled the familiar scent of sweat leather and hard work this scent that immediately transports you back to the place where you once stopped but also challenges you to keep going.

I stepped onto the mat bowed deeply not before a master not before a group but before myself. This bow was an act of respect a silent promise to myself not to give up. It was a sign that I had survived that despite all challenges I still stood and was ready to start anew.

The first training session after this long break was harder than I expected. My body felt stiff and weak movements that once seemed effortless now demanded every single drop of energy. My breath was fast my muscles burned and my mind was tempted to give up. But I stayed.

With every step every punch every kick a feeling returned that I had long thought lost focus discipline that quiet fire burning deep inside me that drove me to keep going not for others but for myself.

Every drop of sweat every muscle ache every exhausted movement was a piece of my own story. They reminded me who I was before pain and disappointment clouded my view. And slowly almost imperceptibly I began to recognize myself again.

The goal was not to prove something to someone else. It was not about showing off strength or seeking recognition. It was about reclaiming my own power that allows me to walk through life with dignity despite everything that was.

This power was not only in the fists or feet I used in training. It was also in how I left the dojo after each session more upright calmer more grounded. It was in how I looked in the mirror

and no longer looked at my reflection with shame but with pride at the man who rebuilt himself breath by breath.

Over time I also found a new meaning in my training. The more I moved the clearer it became to me why I originally fell in love with martial arts. It was not just the physical strength it gave me but above all the values it conveyed discipline humility respect. Martial arts had long been more than a sport for me it had become a way of life.

Soon after my return I began to support the younger students in the dojo. I helped them with the basics corrected their posture encouraged them when they stumbled or doubted. In their eyes I recognized the same sparkle I once carried the initial enthusiasm the desire to improve the silent struggle with oneself.

It became clear to me that I had become a role model that I would have needed in my own youth. A role model that showed not only technique and strength but also the path of patience inner work and personal development.

The boy I was would look up to the man I am today.

This realization struck me deeply stronger than any blow I ever received in the dojo. Because that boy had been through a lot. He had been hurt had experienced setbacks had fallen. And yet he had decided to get up to fight to love to hope.

That is the true nature of a warrior.

A warrior is not someone who never feels pain. A warrior is someone who refuses to be determined by that pain. Who does not let setbacks break him but gets up again in every case.

In the dojo I learned to breathe again not just to draw air into my lungs but to be conscious present in the moment. I learned how to fight not against others but against those inner voices and fears that want to make you give up.

For the first time in a long time I fought not for her not for the recognition of others. I fought for myself.

For my peace For my dignity For the version of myself that deserves better than silent suffering.

Every drop of sweat every aching muscle every step beyond my own limits was not a punishment. It was a rebirth.

And in this rebirth I found something deeper than mere strength.

I found freedom.

Freedom from old patterns Freedom from doubts Freedom from the burden of always having to explain myself.

This freedom gave me the strength to fight not only in the dojo but also in life. It gave me courage to have difficult conversations to take responsibility to make decisions that served my growth.

I began to reorder my life not overnight but step by step. I reset priorities decided which values should guide me. I surrounded myself with people who supported and inspired me and distanced myself from those who weakened me or hindered my development.

During this time I realized that the inner warrior is not only standing in battle. He lives in every moment in which you choose yourself. In dealing with mistakes In forgiving In accepting.

I learned to treat myself with compassion. Mistakes were no longer seen as weaknesses but as learning steps. Injuries not as blemishes but as signs that I had tried. Weakness became strength when I acknowledged it and still went on.

The path was long and not always easy. There were days when I doubted when the old sadness returned and the fear of giving up again was overwhelming. But especially in those moments I remembered why I had chosen this path.

I no longer wanted to be a prisoner of my past. I wanted to be free.

Free to shape my life Free to love myself Free to be the person I always wanted to be deep inside.

The inner warrior does not awaken through external circumstances. He awakens through the decision to no longer be a victim. Through the commitment that every day is a new chance. That it is never too late to start over.

And that is exactly the decision I made.

I awakened the warrior within me.

Not through big words but through small deeds. Through getting up every day. Through continuing even when motivation was lacking. Through the willingness to accept myself with all my strengths and weaknesses.

This chapter is my story about that.

About the realization that true strength comes from within. From the courage to be true to yourself. From the freedom to take your life into your own hands.

The inner warrior is not the one who never falls.

He is the one who always gets up again.

Chapter 10: From broken to creator – giving back

Growth is not always loud. It doesn't need a big show a stage or the spotlight. Often it happens quietly unnoticed in the small decisions we make every day when we have the choice to stay down or get back up. Not to gain recognition or to please someone but because there is no other option than to move forward.

After all I had been through one thing became very clear to me. My pain had shaped me. It had left marks. Scars that reminded me of the darkness I had walked through. But this pain did not define me. On the contrary. It had given me lessons I would never have learned otherwise. Lessons about humility patience perseverance and compassion. Lessons that taught me to see myself and others with different eyes.

I didn't just come back stronger. I came back more grounded.

There was a time when I believed I had to chase external success. Status recognition approval from others. But all that eventually felt empty to me. I understood that true strength comes from within. That it lies in knowing who you are even when the world is silent even when no one applauds.

And at exactly that moment I made a decision that changed everything.

I began to teach.

Not to preach. Not to impress. But to give something back.

The beginning was simple. I just helped out at the martial arts school where I had once trained. Just a few kids. Easy exercises. I watched how they struggled with the stances I myself had known as a beginner. And every time I saw the sparkle in their eyes something stirred inside me. The same glow I had once carried when I first entered the dojo.

These kids reminded me of myself.

In their questions I heard my own past. In their falls I saw my old wounds. And in their perseverance I recognized my future.

Gradually I took on more responsibility. I showed them not just how to fight. I showed them how to stand tall how to respect themselves and others. How to breathe through fear and how to get up again no matter how often they fall.

These kids some shy some wild some with broken confidence became my mirror. And I became the mentor I had needed in my darkest hours.

Every lesson I gave was not just about martial arts.

It was about life.

I told them about mistakes. That mistakes are not the opposite of success but part of the journey. I told them being strong does not mean never crying. But feeling and then choosing to go on.

I spoke little about my past. Just enough so they knew I had fallen hard too. But I never stayed down. I always got back up.

I watched them grow. And as they grew so did I.

My mornings became more meaningful. My evenings filled with purpose. The dojo was no longer a place to escape pain. It became a space to create strength in others.

I had found a new mission.

And with that mission came peace.

Where once I asked "Why did this happen to me?" I now asked "What can I do with what I have learned?"

My pain had turned into power. Not into control but into service.

Every child I guided every belt they earned was a silent echo of my own healing.

That was more than any trophy or award. It was my greatest reward.

Because healing does not just mean fixing yourself.

Healing means using your own journey to help others get up.

The path of the teacher was also a path of self healing. When I saw insecurity turn into courage failure turn into learning steps my conviction grew. Every person carries this power inside. You just have to find and awaken it.

It is not a straight path. Not one without stumbling blocks. But a path worth taking.

I learned to listen. Really listen. Not just to words but to what remained unspoken. The pain behind the facade the fear behind the laughter the hope behind the silence.

I learned that every story is unique. That no one has the same experiences even if the circumstances seem similar. That we all fight love and grow in our own way.

Through this work I realized how much I had received. Not just from the dojo but from life itself. From people who believed in me when I doubted myself. From friends who were there when it got dark. From moments of silence where I could find myself anew.

Giving back became more than a word for me. It became an attitude. A drive.

I realized that what we give often comes back. Not always in the form we expect. But always as a gift.

Teaching made me grateful. For the small progress. For the trust given to me. For the chance to leave a mark.

I also began to get involved outside the dojo. I gave talks about resilience about dealing with setbacks. I wrote texts and shared my experiences to encourage others to walk their own path.

Sometimes people came up to me and said my words had moved them. That they had found hope through my story.

That filled me deeply.

It showed me that our pain is not in vain. That by sharing our story we can build bridges. To others to ourselves to a better world.

The journey from broken to creator is not a straight line.

It is a dance of falling and getting up. Of letting go and holding on. Of darkness and light.

But it is a journey worth taking. Because in the end it is not only healing for ourselves. But the power to give back to grow to create. And that is true greatness.

Not in perfection. Not in pressure to succeed.

But in the courage to keep going despite everything. In the courage to let your own light shine. And in the courage to walk with others on their path.

I have learned that life is not about being invulnerable. But about being vulnerable. Showing up. And still moving forward.

This is the story I want to live. This is the story I want to tell.

From broken to creator. From giving up to giving back.

From pain to power.

And I know I will keep walking this path.

Every day anew.