

Hearts Under Siege

A Poetic Diary of Survival

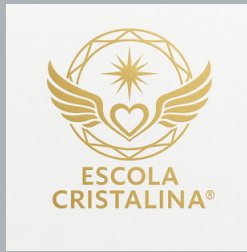
By Suleiman Al-Farra



A heartbeat turned into words.

**With an introduction by Ana Isabel Ferreira,
Escola Cristalina®**

Published by Escola Cristalina®



Published by Escola Cristalina®
(Crystalline School)

A registered mark of light, compassion, and collective healing, born between Portugal and Brazil, expanding wherever hearts seek truth.

Founded by Ana Isabel Ferreira, psychologist and creator of Escola Cristalina®, this project embodies the School's devotion to bringing light into real world suffering. It is a bridge where faith and humanity meet in action, restoring faith, dignity, and humanity.

Through the power of truth and love, the Escola Cristalina® stands as a beacon of conscious healing, reminding us that every act of compassion has the power to transform the world.



“Suleiman Al-Farra, author of Hearts Under Siege, photographed in 2025, Gaza.”

Note to the reader

This e-book is made available free of charge, as an act of love and a living testimony of the courage and hope of Suleiman Al-Farra, a 24 year-old man from Gaza.

If these words touch your heart, we invite you to transform reading into action by making a donation. All funds go directly to Suleiman through the Chuffed.org platform at the end of this book.

Escola Cristalina® does not retain any amount: this project is an act of solidarity and trust.

Preface

May every reader find in these pages not only testimonies of pain, but also reflections of hope.

*I thank **Suleiman Al-Farra** for his trust and friendship. May this book help his voice to be heard - his, and the voices of all those still living in the shadow of conflict- and may it remind us of the power of empathy.*

May each reader, upon entering these words, feel inspired to listen, to extend a hand, and to remember that healing begins when one heart dares to reach another.

May we keep the fabric of humanity alive, thread by thread, through compassion and action.

I thank Ana for standing by my side and with me in the most difficult moment of my life.

Through this book, I wish for one simple thing - to be heard.

For my words to remind the world that we are not numbers, we are lives that still dream of freedom, safety and peace.

May these poems carry not only my story but the heartbeat of Gaza - a call for life that refuses to be silenced.

Ana Isabel Ferreira



Suleiman Al-Farra

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kept writing under siege*

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Introduction

by Ana Isabel Ferreira

*Psychologist & Founder of
Escola Cristalina®*

*This is not just a book — it's a human
heartbeat turned into words.*

Each page carries a pulse that belongs to life itself

fragile, trembling, yet impossibly alive.

These are not simply poems.

They are fragments of existence,

whispered between nights of fear,

between hunger and hope,

between what was lost and what refuses to die.

This diary is more than a collection of texts.

It is a poetic chronicle of survival,
written by Suleiman Al-Farra,
a 24 year-old man living in Gaza,
a land where every dawn brings both loss and hope.

The words you will find here were born among tents
and ruins,
in nights without sleep,
under the sounds of chaos that tried and failed
to silence the soul.

In the shadow of turmoil, these words became both
wounds and wings,
cries, prayers, and fragments of pain
that still carry the seeds of hope.

As a psychologist, I have spent many years working
with those
who live under the weight of trauma.
In clinical terms, Suleiman's reality reflects what we call
Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD),
a form of suffering that appears
when a human being is exposed, again and again,
to fear, loss, and helplessness that never ends.

But what I have witnessed, in Gaza, and in the lives of many I have met
is that this pain does not only wound the mind;
it reshapes the body, the heart and even the meaning of life itself.

It is not only about surviving.
It is about remembering who we are
when the world seems to forget.

For years I worked in community development in Portugal,
and later, I devoted myself to understanding the deep roots
of complex trauma
the invisible wars that happen inside families,
in abusive relationships,
in the quiet destruction caused by abusive dynamics
and toxic relationships.

Gaza, however, becomes a mirror — where both visible and invisible forms of violence coexist.





Between silence and dust, faith still breathes.

There, people endure not only the harshness of
bombs,
And sometimes, those they look to for protection
cannot ease their pain.

And yet , in the middle of this desolation ,
Suleiman writes.

He writes not to escape,
but to honour life.

His words rise like prayer from the dust ,
a language born of heartbreak,
but carried by faith.

They remind us that even when the world collapses,
the soul can still whisper “I am here”.

The Beginning of Silence

Feb, 2025



There was a day when the
city stopped breathing.

Not because the air was
gone,
but because we all forgot
how to inhale without
fear.

I remember the first blast

windows turning into
wind,
light becoming dust.

Since then, silence has
become our language.

“Even silence sounds like fear.”

The Morning After

Feb, 2025

The morning after the
bombing,
silence fell like ash.

The city breathed in
dust,
and I could still hear
the echo of prayers
that never reached the
sky.

I picked up a brick...
my mother's window,
my sister's laughter,
my own reflection.

How strange that the
sun still rises
over ruins that refuse to
forget.



*"The day after is never
just a day... it's the weight
of what's gone."*

Shadows in the Dust

March, 2025

Every corner of this camp holds ghosts.
You touch a wall and feel a heartbeat
that doesn't belong to you.
Sometimes I forget my own voice,
buried beneath the echo of others
who never came back.

The dust here is sacred
made of what once was us.

*"The body remembers
what the mind tries to
forget".*



Mother

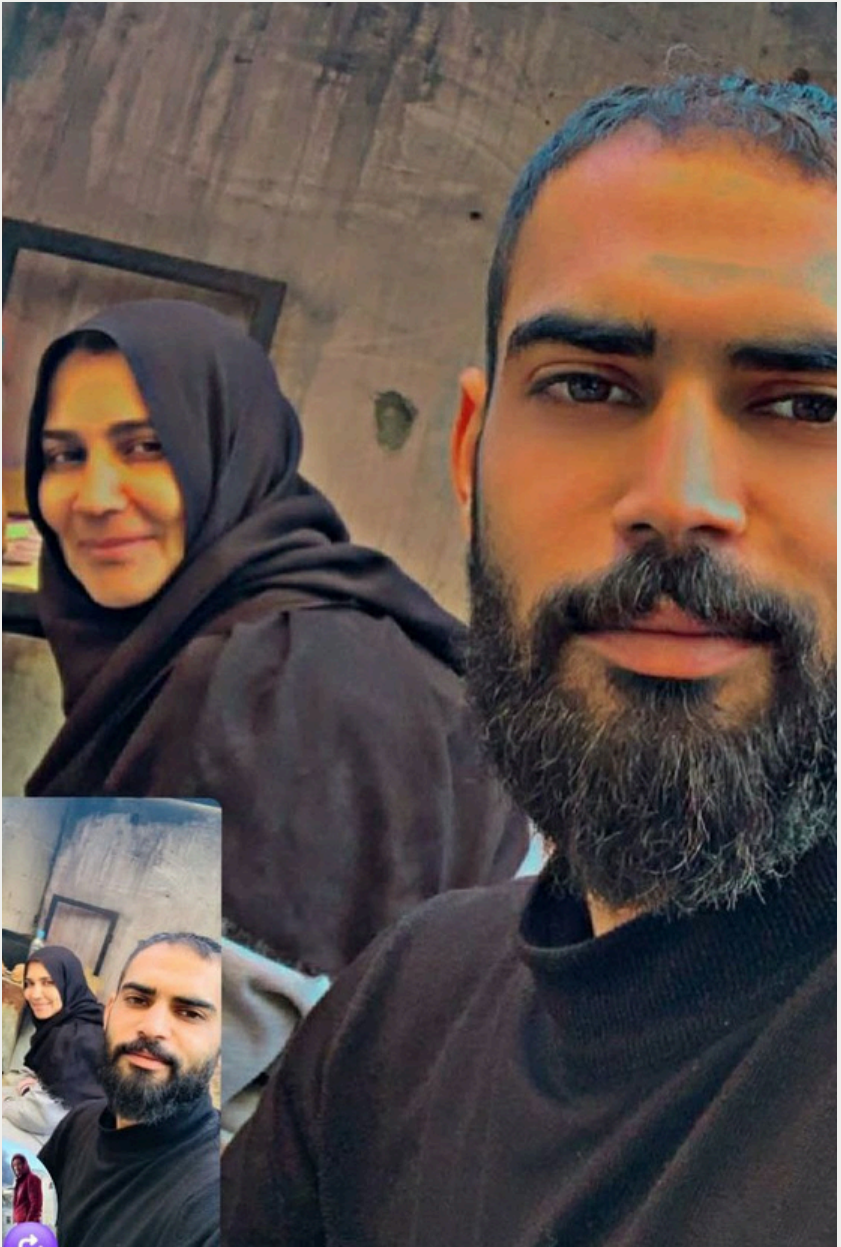
March, 2025

Her smile was my shelter.

Even when fear arrived before the dawn,
she kept a calm that fooled the storm.

I carry her voice in my veins,
the only melody that still believes
in peace.





“Her smile is my shelter amid the storm”

The Day the Sky Fell

April, 2025

The day the sky fell,
it didn't rain - it
screamed.

I saw a house fold into
itself

like paper burning
from within.

I still hear the sound —
metal weeping,
earth bleeding.

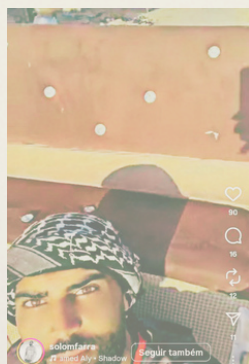
And yet,
the sky is still above
us.

The Road Beneath Us

May, 2025

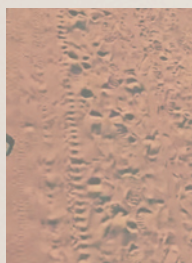
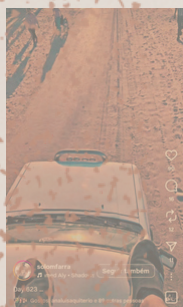
We left before dawn,
carrying our homes on
our backs -
bags full of dust,
hearts full of names
we couldn't take.

The road was a prayer
whispered in bare feet,
a promise to keep
walking
even when the sky
forgot our names.



Every step became
a heartbeat,
every shadow, a
memory.

And though we had
nowhere to go,
we carried Gaza
within us -
like a secret flame
that refused to die.



"Again and again..."

The Weight of Dust

April, 2025

Some nights,
the dust feels
heavier than the
sky.

It clings to our
skin,
to our names,
to everything we
once called home.

I shake it off,
but it returns -

not as dirt,
but as memory.



"We are not buried yet."

Children of the Tents

May, 2025

Laughter rises between
torn fabrics –

fragile,
and yet stronger than
fear.

A child runs barefoot
through dust,

holding a piece of
bread
as if it were a flag of
peace.

Hope has their eyes.



"They still find ways to smile between ruins"

Thirst

May, 2025

We count drops
the way others count blessings.

Each sip is a memory of rain –
of mornings when water had no price.

Now thirst teaches patience,
and our lips learn prayer

without words.



“There are hearts only silence can understand”

Inside the Tent

May, 2025



Silence has a different sound here,
soft, like fabric touching skin.

The walls breathe with us,
stitched from fear and faith.

At night,
I listen to the wind
and pretend it's the sea.

*“Home is sometimes only the space between
breaths.”*

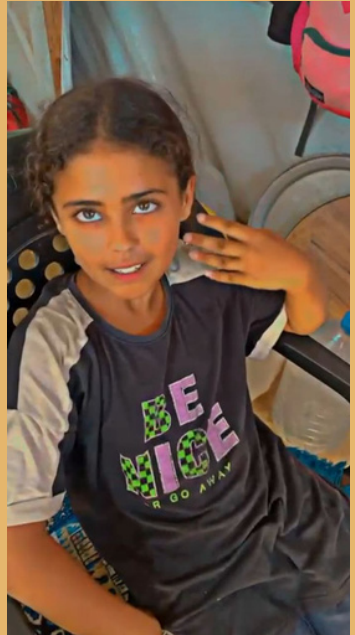
Be Nice or Go Away

June, 2025

I saw my niece wearing a
shirt
that said Be Nice or Go
Away.

I laughed –
because kindness
has become the bravest
rebellion here.

In a land where cruelty is
loud,
gentleness is resistance.



“Kindness is the last form of courage.”

The Taste of Morning

June, 2025



Bread and dust,
that's our breakfast now.

And yet,
somehow the light still tastes sweet.

We share what little we have-
not out of plenty,
but out of love
that refuses to starve.

"Love is the only meal that never ends."

It's Gone...

Jul, 2025



Me and my late father (may Allah have mercy on him and grant him paradise) in front of our home.

Our home is gone.

I still can't believe it... our house is completely destroyed.

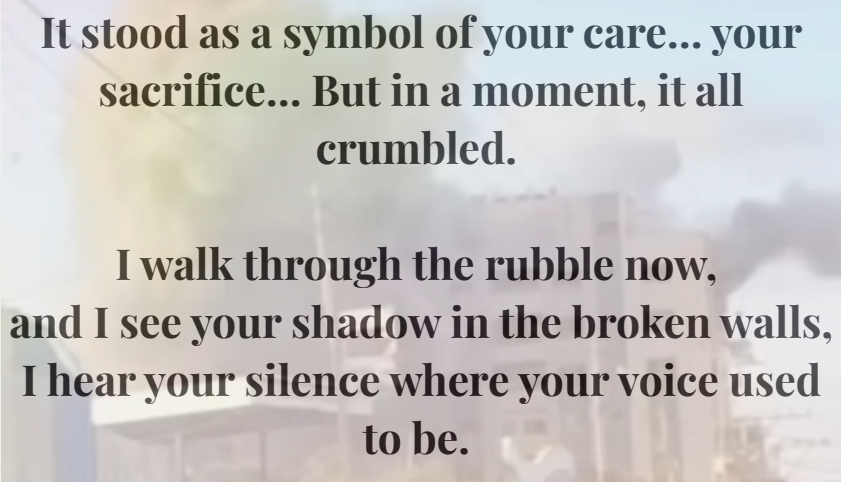
It wasn't just walls and a roof — it was everything.

It held our memories, our childhood, our dreams... It was the place where I saw my father in every corner.

My father is gone.

And now, the house is gone too.

You worked so hard your whole life, Dad.
You poured your strength, your years, your
love into building that home for us.



**It stood as a symbol of your care... your
sacrifice... But in a moment, it all
crumbled.**

**I walk through the rubble now,
and I see your shadow in the broken walls,
I hear your silence where your voice used
to be.**

God have mercy on your soul, Dad. You gave
us a place to feel safe, And now even that
safety is gone.

You left this world, and the home that
carried your spirit followed you.

Everything is destroyed...

Not just the house .

My heart, my peace, my memories... All
turned to dust.

I don't know where to go, I don't know how
to breathe in this emptiness.

I feel like I'm screaming but no one hears.

I cry in silence so my mother doesn't see
me breaking.

The home that felt like you, Dad, is gone.
And now, I feel like I have nothing left.

Everything I loved has vanished.

All that remains is pain... and your memory,
which I will carry until the end of my days.



*There are screams that must be given in silence,
for no voice is strong enough to express the
depth of such pain.*

Noor

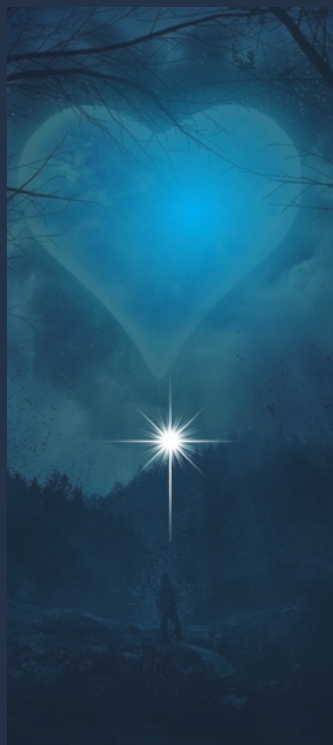


Sitting here in the tent,
there's no light around me,

only the moonlight, far
away.

That's the light of my life ,
distant, unreachable,
like everything I dream of.

My life feels like that light ,
outside of Gaza,
far from where I am,
but close to my heart.



Every night, I whisper to
myself:

Be patient. The road is
long, but your light is
waiting.

*"She is the light
beyond the siege".*

To God We Belong

Jul, 2025

Yesterday, my cousin
was martyred.

He wasn't a fighter.

He wasn't a
politician.

It was only the day
before, that we sat
together and shared a
laugh.

He was a young man
who dreamed of
going to university,
learning other
languages, and
traveling.

He is 20 years old.

He was a kid. A kid who died hungry.

He was martyred while trying to get flour
from an "aid" point.

We are dying one after another just to find
food.

He left his home to get flour to feed his
family only to be returned in a burial
shroud.

We are not numbers. We are sons,
brothers, uncles, fathers, and cousins.

We are the hope of a nation, the promise
of a better tomorrow.

We are the sons of Gaza.

Our beautiful Gaza that held so many
precious memories, but has now become
a nightmare that we wish to awaken from.

"Indeed, from Allah we come, and to Him we shall return."

A Message from a Besieged Heart Jul, 2025



“Beauty too, can be a prison”.

We are not truly living
we are merely trying to breathe.

This sunset may look beautiful,
but behind it lies the pain the world doesn't see.

On this beach,
we wash not out of love for the sea,
but because there is no clean water left.

Entire families live in tents made of plastic
and cloth,
placed on the sand under a burning sky.

We didn't choose this.
We lost everything.

Still, we try to hold on to life.

We are not numbers.
We are human beings.
We had dreams, families, homes.

And yet,
we remain here,
hearts under siege,
still beating against the silence.



"Even a feather can leave a mark on eternity"

Childhood Interrupted

Aug, 2025



There was a child today
who built a house out
of dust

four walls of
imagination,
a roof made of hope.

She called it home
and smiled at the sky
as if it would listen.



Then the wind came,
and the house was
gone.

She looked at her
hands,
still full of invisible
bricks.

That's how childhood
ends here,

not with growing up,
but with learning
how to rebuild
what the world keeps
breaking.

*"Childhood- between what was paused
and what must go on."*

Little Ones

Sep, 2025



*This was written some
time in January of this
year.*

*Our children are
experiencing pain
beyond their years and
are deprived of their
rights.*

*Our children deserve
life, too.*

O little ones, you
carry your innocence
on a land that groans
with pain, raising the
flag of the homeland
with small hands, yet
your hearts hold
dreams as vast as the
universe.

How painful it is that
wars steal your
childhood, and how
heartbreaking it is
that you bear burdens
greater than your
years.

*“May the world remember that every child deserves
to grow, not to survive.”*

Ashes and Seeds

Sep, 2025

There are two kinds of
people left here:
those who bury,
and those who plant.



Some days,
it's hard to tell
which one I am.

But every time
I see a child draw a
flower
in the sand,
I remember,

hope grows
even in the ashes.



“From the ashes, we learned to shape our hearts”

The Reunion

Sept 2025

I dream of familiar eyes,

of laughter that
survived the distance.

If love can travel
through silence,

it will find its way back.

Maybe not in this life.

But love always
remembers the road
home.



*“What was written in the stars
can never be forgotten.”*

The Camp of Dust

Sep, 2025

We wake to the same
wind every morning,
carrying the smell of
burnt wood and
longing.

walls made of dreams,
roofs made of clouds.
And when the wind
erases them,
they start again.

The tents breathe
like tired lungs,
inhaling dust,
exhaling hope.

At night, silence feels
heavier than the sky.
We count stars instead
of hours,
and whisper names of
those we miss,
as if memory itself
could bring them back.

Children draw homes
on the sand,



Here, survival is not
about food or water —
it's about keeping the
heart from turning to
stone.

*"My dear heart,
please, stay alive."*

Freedom

Sep, 2025



I sat beside the tent, wrapped in silence and
dust.

Suddenly, the sky lit up
not with dawn, not with sunset,
but with fire.

Red light tore through the dark,
and the sound - a roar so loud
it shook the earth, but not my heart.

My heart stayed still
heavy, carrying dreams of freedom,
and a life I've never lived.

I looked up at the sky, not in fear,
but with a quiet ache,
as if I could chase my dream through the
smoke.

I whispered, “God, I don’t ask for much...
Just let me live.”

Let me breathe without fear.

Let me write a line of poetry,
not a line of goodbye.

*The transcendent power of a heart that burns in love,
that burns in the fire of love.*



The Sea Remembers

Oct, 2025

Sometimes I
dream of the sea,

not the sea that
takes,
but the one that
returns.



It whispers of
mornings
before the smoke,
before the silence,
when laughter had a
shore to reach.

*"Maybe the sea will
carrie the memory
of my name..."*

I close my eyes
and the waves call
my name

as if they still
remember
who I was

before the war
taught me otherwise.

An Ode to Hope: The Flotilla Oct, 2025



Today, hundreds of people I've never met
are risking their lives to help us survive.

They don't know our names,
but their hearts know our pain.

They sail toward us with courage as their
compass,
and hope as their sail.
In moments of exhaustion,

I feel the world pressing on my chest,
as if I carry all its sorrow within me.

Yet before the sunset,
I let my soul breathe,
reminding myself that life, despite
everything,
still holds its beauty.

The days show no mercy,
and the roads are filled with sorrow,
but I refuse to surrender.

I believe that hope is not an illusion,
and that after every darkness,
a light will rise again.

I write my pain like a poem,
speaking to the sea and the sky
as if they were my dearest friends.

Here I stand,
and despite all that has passed,
I will love life even more,
and keep chasing hope,
even if it's the last thread of light
at the edge of the sunset.



*"Hope sails
where fear cannot follow."*

The Shooting Night

-Last Entry -

Oct, 2025

Tonight, I woke to the sound of bullets.
No warning, no reason - just the language
of fear.

I counted the seconds between shots,
measuring the distance between life and
death.

Somewhere, a child cried.

Somewhere, another voice stopped
forever.

I whispered to the dark:
“Not yet.”

*“We live between breaths, never knowing
which one will be the last”.*

Before the War Had a Name

There was a time when I wrote about sunsets,
not survival.

When my hands held books,
not rubble.

I was preparing for life,
not for war.



“When tomorrow and yesterday are stolen”

About the Author

Suleiman Al-Farra

*Suleiman Al-Farra is a
24 year-old writer and photographer from
Gaza.*

*Before the war, he lived with his mother,
younger sister, and younger brother.*

*His father passed away when he was
very young, and from an early age
Suleiman became one of the main pillars
of his family.*

*He and a close friend ran a small clothing
shop together,
a business that sustain their daily lives.*

*Since the beginning of the siege,
Suleiman and his family have been
displaced ten times,
forced to move again and again in search
of safety.*

*This diary records
the last
displacement,
written from the
tent where they
now live by the sea.*



*From there, Suleiman began to write,
turning pain into poetry,
and survival into testimony.*

*His words, sent from a besieged heart,
became a way to speak to the world
when the world had fallen silent.*

*He continues to document life in Gaza
through his writing and photography,
transforming fear into hope- one
heartbeat at a time.*



***“We are not numbers.
We are human beings, and we still
dream.”***

*This book gathers fragments of those
dreams,
a record of endurance, love,
and the quiet courage of survival.*

Written and edited with the support of Ana Isabel Ferreira,
Portugal, 2025.

Across the Distance

How this book is born

Through a fragile screen, worlds met.

Between silence and signal,
compassion found its way.

Two souls - one witnessing, one
surviving,
held the same prayer for life.

The social media, so often cruel,
became a bridge of light.



*Proof that even in
siege, humanity can
still reach across
oceans.*

From Ana

*I witnessed what words cannot hold.
Through the small window of a screen,
I saw hunger, exhaustion
and a courage that refused to die.*

*I saw a man giving every crumb
to the children in his care.
I saw the truth
behind the silence of the world.*

*As a psychologist, I have learned about
trauma,
but this was different.
To witness, even from afar,
is to carry a part of the wound.*

*What I witnessed will never leave me,
it changed me,
as perhaps it can change us all.*



*For all who dared to care,
this book is also yours.*

Support & Continuation

Instagram and Websites

This story does not end here.

If you wish to follow Suleiman's journey
or support his family,
you can find their updates and ongoing
story online.

Each post is a reflection of survival,
dignity, and hope.



Follow Suleiman:

Instagram — [@solomfarra](#)



Follow Ana Isabel Ferreira:

Instagram — [@ana.psi.online](#)



Escola Cristalina:

Instagram — [@escolacristalina](#)

Website — [www.escolacristalina.com](#)


 **Support Suleiman and his family:**
<https://chuffed.org/project/helpsuleiman>

Your sharing and support an act of compassion.

Share this book

This project is a call from the heart — a bridge of hope built through words and care.

If this story touched you, please help us by sharing it with the world.

 Send the link to your friends, communities, and networks.

Each reader who downloads this book becomes part of the bridge - a witness, a voice, a heartbeat that keeps Gaza alive.



*From the ashes, we built a bridge of
humanity.*

*Das cinzas, erguemos uma ponte de
humanidade.*

من بين الرماد، بنينا جسراً

May this bridge of hearts keep carrying
light where silence once lived.



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