

The Mangy Dog

No one remembered when it appeared in the city.
A sick dog. No home, no owner.
It was needed by no one — like trash thrown into the street.
Mangy, torn, crippled, abandoned by everyone, with nowhere to go.
In a city where there is no pity, no sensitivity, no compassion.
Where the strong devour the weak, and vice has become a role model.

Something weak and ugly, with patchy fur, beaten up, with rotting eyes of a defenseless creature — looked into the faces of passers-by rushing about their business. And those, who met her eyes would never be the same again. When, out of despair, the dog tried to come closer to people, it only heard:
— Get the fuck out, you piece of shit!
And it backed away, tucking its torn tail, as if finally realizing that no one would feed or pet it anymore.

On that rainy day, some passerby, out of spite, broke its hind legs with a cane — just because it crossed his path. Now the crippled dog lay on the dirty roadside, breathing heavily and staring into emptiness.
And people walking past pretended it didn't exist — or spat on it in disgust.
They had rejected love and compassion, which had become shameful.
Mercy — now considered weakness.
As if everyone who saw her — was taking a test.
For humanity. For fear. For their hidden thirst for violence.

A passing truck driver crushed the defenseless creature. Later, at a bar, he boasted to his friends how he crushed a dog crawling by the roadside — just for fun.
— It even crunched! — he said, choking with drunken laughter.

But the next morning, the dog would come back to life in another part of the city — alive again, disgusting everyone just by existing.

They tormented her, poisoned her, killed her — but she came back to life again.
That dog wasn't a living creature anymore — but a vessel for all the pain the city projected onto her.
She soaked up all the hatred for ugliness into her mutilated body. And people, again and again, beat their own evil into her every day.
All their rot, buried inside — would rise to the surface when they saw her.

The last time, after kids beat her nearly to death with rebar at a dump and then tried to set her on fire — barely breathing, crippled, she crawled onto a rotting mattress behind trash bins and quietly died.
And no one noticed her death.
Only the crows screeched loudly from the trees, as if they own way cursing the city and everyone in it in their own bird language.

— Another city has failed the test of humanity, — said the demon, flying out of the mutilated corpse of the dog, and, turning into wind, rushed away with yellow autumn leaves.

And in the morning, the city began to die.

The End

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Vladislav