

# The fallen dragons of Bavaria

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Three years ago, weeks after Robin Williams' suicide, Kazuyuki landed in Munich for the first time, looking forward to a new life. I didn't know it then, but he would become our savior. His desperate need for a well-paying job and the frightening amount of rejections forced him to accept this offer as a junior frontend web developer for a dead cold company. Except for a few basic expressions his mouth was empty when it came to German. Yet he had hope to survive. While he nervously waited for his luggage to arrive, a beastly drunk man, who probably hasn't taken a shower

in decades, bumped into him. He blabbered something, which could've been an apology, but Kazuyuki didn't understand a word. Holding his breath, Kazuyuki walked away, but the drunkard kept following him.

»Stop! The fallen dragons of Bavaria need you! You stop, *deppad!*«, he screamed. When Kazuyuki saw his luggage, he quickly picked it up and escaped this lunatic old man. Good for him, but not for us.

This weird incident remained sealed and unopened in his memories until a year later. Almost every bit of optimism vanished in Kazuyuki's soul. His work wasn't too difficult, but due to the language barrier, he didn't feel welcome in this humongous company. The people at his company weren't companions - his colleagues were friendly, but not friends. Although the work experience in Japan wasn't too different, this kind of hardship in a new place led to a depressing daily routine. The only light in his sight was his best friend, Nisanur. She loved Bavaria and knew everything about the people and the history. As a fellow migrant she helped him in many ways, from learning the German language-

ge to talking to Germans. In return, he helped her with the development of her research website. But there was another connection between them that they never talked about. Sometimes, when she thought he wasn't looking, her smile would fade, and she'd stare into the distance as if searching for something she'd lost long ago.

A few days after a series of suicide bombings in Paris, Kazuyuki was visiting the local library. For his best friend's birthday, he was in search of interesting information about Bavaria that she didn't know about. Secretly he was aware of his naivety and didn't expect much. Yet to his surprise, when he expressed his wish to the librarian, who looked like she'd outlived a few tortoises, she already had a black leather-bound book ready on her desk. With an unnatural grin on her face, the lady gave it to him. Kazuyuki shook his head as he scrolled through the book. All pages were blank.

»This is probably not what I need«, he said with a confused smile.

»*So ein Schmarren!* You absolutely do need it. And the fallen

dragons of Bavaria need you«, she said. Instantly the developer remembered the drunkard at the airport and the words that had seemed harmless at first now scared him to death. Who are the fallen dragons of Bavaria? Is this something real? For a second he was lost in his thoughts and he clung the book closer to him or maybe the book itself refused to leave him. When he looked up, the librarian was gone. On his way home, he was conflicted about whether he should share this discovery with Nisanur or keep it to himself. In the end he let the book collect dust in the bottom drawer.

None of this has any relation to why Kazuyuki looked for online guides on how to kill himself, a few hours after Nisanur jumped down from the Olympia tower right in front of him and died. Why did she commit suicide? Why had she never shared her problems with him? His only light in his life was gone. He was ready to enter the everlasting darkness. The internet disappointed him. He threw away his keyboard and punched down his monitor. Instead of following these costly, perfected suicide guides for an easy painless death, he walked to the kitchen and

began sharpening a knife. His mind kept repeating Nisanur's last words.

»Don't worry about me. They'll learn to fly again and catch me«, she said. He tried to demystify these words over and over again without any success until he suddenly remembered the fallen dragons of Bavaria. Is that what she meant? He laid the sharp knife aside and went to the living room. The moment, he opened the bottom drawer in the darkness, he began cursing himself for not sharing the book with Nisanur. In a magically glowing light, the title on the leather cover read: *The fallen dragons of Bavaria*. He looked through the pages, that used to be blank, and finally discovered the guide for the revival of me and my family - the ancient dragons of Bavaria, cursed to fall from the skies centuries ago. It hurt that the last words of a poor, mentally ill woman had created a false hope for this young man. But I was glad that, at least this way, he could be saved. The book guided him through Bavaria's forgotten places - abandoned castles, deep forests, cursed lakes. He faced gods who'd forgotten mercy, demons who fed on despair, and even the *Krampus* himself, who laughed at his

mortal fragility. But Kazuyuki didn't stop. After restless days without sleep to save us, the least I could do for my hero was to learn to fly again, catch the only light in his life and bring her back to him.