

GEORGIAN SQUARE. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EUROPEAN FUTURE

Georgia, December 2024. After falsified

parliamentary elections and the declaration of the pro-Russian party as the winners, the country is engulfed in a wave of protests. Georgians who dream of a European future take to the streets every day with demands for legitimate elections, democracy and a course towards Europe, not Russia.

After learning about these events, I could not stay away. I have an old Georgian friend, and his stories about the events on Rustaveli Street and Freedom Square reminded me of our Maidan in 2013-2014. I realized that I had to be there. Four hours before departure, I bought the last ticket to Tbilisi to support the Georgians in their struggle.

Four days of freedom

My four days in Georgia were filled with protests. Every day we are with a friend

joined thousands of people on Freedom Square. The atmosphere was powerful and at the same time disturbing - people were demanding justice, despite all the risks.

Fireworks became a special symbol of the protest. Every evening, they lit up the sky and "set fire" to the parliament, emphasizing the resilience and hope of the people. For me,

Ukrainian women, who during the full-scale invasion began to associate any explosions with fear and trauma, these fireworks became an exception. They did not carry pain, but freedom and joy, they reminded us of the light that we will definitely choose.

The darkness of repression

However, the authorities responded with methods that are painfully familiar to us Ukrainians: Berkut-type security forces disperse rallies, use water cannons, tear gas and beat protesters. "Aunts" wait in the alleys, catching people alone.

Some activists are detained right in their homes under the pretext of "searches".

My last day, the night from December 6 to 7, became the scariest. We were surrounded. On one side - water cannons and gas, on the other - security forces, who beat everyone they could catch to half-death and took them away in one direction. My friend was able to find a way out for us. He also gave me his gas mask and glasses. I thank him very much! I think it was a lucky coincidence that everything is fine with us.

Stage 4 cancer

The situation in Georgia is like stage 4 cancer. The authorities act using all possible mechanisms to suppress protests. The judicial system is on the side of repression. Foreigners, although this is rare, especially like to detain them in order to support the propaganda about "foreign agents".



However, Georgians do not give up. Despite hundreds of detainees, dozens of those who received criminal terms, they continue to fight. This is their only way, and they will not leave it.

Together in the fight

On my way home, I thought about how important it is to be around in these moments. We, Ukrainians, well understand what it means to fight for freedom. And today we stand next to the Georgians, and the Georgians stand with us. In Georgia, wherever the Georgian flag hangs, there is also the Ukrainian flag! Sometimes it even seems that there are more Ukrainians.

Their pain and their strength remind us of our own path. And although the struggle is long and difficult, it is worth every drop of blood, sweat and tears. We will definitely win

– each of us who fight against this tumor makes the world stronger.

The fireworks that accompanied the protests became a symbol of hope for me. They reminded that even in the darkest times light finds its way.

Georgia, we are with you. Thank you for being with us.

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