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A Storm of Words

The Woman, Life, Freedom Revolution as Told by Those Who Waged It

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Words from Iranian youths, saved from the winds: when courage speaks out.

Mahsa Jina Amini was arrested for allegedly not wearing the hijab in accordance with government standards. Her death in custody on September 16, 2022 kicked off Iran's "Woman, Life, Freedom" revolution. Her compatriot, writer Chahla Chafiq, tracked these words and the blaze they lit: they take their part in Iranian poetry's protest tradition, and the entire country used them: "I am the phoenix rising from the ashes of a burnt generation", "I am the suffering we all suffer: cry out my name" Stolen from the censorship of a repressive government on its last legs, these words illuminate the courage of young people who died in hopes of victory.