

Benharmonia

**The Revolution
of Giving**

Characters:

Maya: A young woman from India, tech-savvy, pragmatic and idealistic.

Elena: An elderly woman from Germany, an experienced campaigner with a fine sense of humour.

Carlos: A young man from Latin America, an entrepreneur who believes in social change but is full of contradictions.

Max: An older man from the USA, a former financial analyst, wise and critical.

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References are not required.

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1. INTRODUCTION: THE STORM APPROACHES

* The scene opens on a terrace overlooking a lively town. It is a hot summer's day and the four are having drinks together.*

****Maya**** (looks with a sigh at the city):

„It feels like the world is falling apart. Everything revolves around profit, while more and more people are suffering and the earth is coming under increasing pressure.“

****Carlos**** (smirks):

„That's right, but as long as the stock market keeps going up, who's going to care, right?“

And even if the oceans are fished out, at least we had sushi.”

****Elena**** (smiles ironically):

„You're joking, but that's exactly the problem. For decades, scientists have been warning us about the consequences of our actions – but we just don't listen. Now, with the internet and artificial intelligence, we could organise so many things better. Actually, the market would be superfluous.”

****Max**** (takes a sip of his drink):

„Yes, we all take part. Everyone wants more pay, more pension, more prosperity,

although we feel inwardly that the limits were exceeded long ago."

****Elena**** (agrees angrily):

„Yes, we are so helpless. Arms exports, inaction on climate change, everything for economic growth. And the politicians only have half-hearted excuses. This is dividing our society."

****Maya**** (nods vigorously):

„That's exactly it! We have internalised that without growth everything collapses. But that is simply wrong. Most natural systems strive for balance. Why shouldn't our economy be able to pursue the same goal?"

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2. WHAT IS THE REAL CAUSE OF GLOBAL PROBLEMS: THE ECONOMY OR THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM?

****Carlos**** (curious, leans forward):

„So, where do you think the real problem lies? Is it our economy in itself or the financial system that drives everything?“

****Max**** (reflectively):

„That's a good question. Yes, all companies have to make a profit, otherwise they will go under. So it must be the financial system that drives the economy.“

****Elena**** (approving):

„It is a vicious circle. The financial system uses the economy to multiply the money. In theory, the economy could function without growth, but financial pressure leaves the economy no choice.“

****Maya**** (adds):

„Right. And the economy, in turn, forces people to consume more and more through advertising, discounting and planned obsolescence so that growth can continue.“

****Carlos**** (angry):

„And that's not all! Because people are saturated, consumption is declining. That's why everything is now being focused on arms exports and the hope of being able to profit handsomely from the reconstruction of the war damage. Nothing is being done about climate change either, because repairing the damage caused by climate catastrophes also benefits growth.“

****Maya**** (doubtfully):

„But if growth were to slow and the economy were to shrink, wouldn't people have to sacrifice their prosperity?“

****Elena**** (explaining):

„Sacrifice is relative. It all depends on how we define prosperity. Today, politicians define prosperity in terms of consumption, because consumption serves growth. If this influence were removed, we would not mind if the economy shrunk and the planet could recover.“

****Maya**** (confirmed):

„Exactly, we have known for a long time that consumerism does not make us happier but brings stress into our lives.“

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3. HOW CAN WE DECOUPLE THE FINANCIAL SYSTEM FROM THE ECONOMY?

****Max**** (seriously, leans back):

„The question is how we can take the financial system out of the equation. If we eliminate the pressure of profit and interest, can the economy really change?“

****Elena**** (arches an eyebrow):

„You're suggesting we simply abolish money?“

****Max**** (explaining):

„No, not necessarily. It's more about removing the role of money in the economy

so that the financial system no longer has a point of attack. Imagine if we continued to produce as before, but no longer assigned financial value to goods.”

****Elena**** (amazedly):

„Exactly, the goods could then be distributed freely, everyone takes what they really need and people would volunteer to work in return.”

****Maya**** (confirming):

„You're so right! If goods were freely distributed, advertising would be absolute nonsense. That's why everyone really only takes what they need for a contented and

happy life. We will probably also rediscover the importance of leisure time.”

****Carlos**** (with a raised eyebrow):

„Of course, it's that simple. The goods only get their monetary value from the paid labour that goes into them.”

****Elena**** (blinking):

„So we would only need to work for free and thus the goods would be free of charge. This means that the financial system is out of the economy.”

****Maya**** (smiles):

„It may sound radical, but think about it. We even organise global voluntary cooperation today, whether it's disaster relief or social movements. Everything that happens at home in the upbringing of our children and the care of our relatives is voluntary. Why shouldn't it work in the economy as well?“

****Carlos**** (smiling):

‘The goods produced don't care whether they are produced by paid or voluntary work.’

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4. THE REVOLUTION OF GIVING

****Max**** (laughs):

„Do you really think that people would just start working for free?“

****Elena**** (in a light-hearted way):

„Why not? In a way, they already do. Only during the day we work for money and use our elbows. But what about when we come home?“

****Maya**** (confirming):

„Of course, that's exactly how it is! Every day when we come home, we are completely

different. Then we are cooperative and supportive. In a sense, we work voluntarily about half of each day, and usually with much more commitment. If work were no longer just a means to make money, everything would change.

****Carlos**** (definitely):

„You are quite right, the environment demands that we be one way or the other. The environment determines how we behave. It is as if we are social chameleons that always adapt to our surroundings.“

****Elena**** (thoughtful):

„But how should people be encouraged to volunteer?“

****Maya**** (glancing at Max):

„History shows that major changes are often triggered by crises. And the crises are already here. Climate change, scarcity of resources, social inequality, wars over raw material deposits.“

****Carlos**** (exciting):

„Exactly! Something like a global general strike could happen, most people can imagine that. But instead of stopping work, we would voluntarily continue it.“

****Elena**** (enthusiastically):

“To stop working would really be nonsense. We don't want to disrupt the economy, we want to liberate it.”

****Max**** (nods):

„It's a radical approach, but not unrealistic. Supply chains would remain intact and goods would be freely accessible. Goodbye financial system and that was it.”

****Carlos**** (nods):

“The key is simply that the economy must not collapse. We are just freeing the economy from the constraints of the financial

system, and then it will become sustainable all by itself.”

****Elena**** (enthusiastically):

“That's exactly how it will be! Most entrepreneurs today want to produce sustainably, but because of the pressure to make a profit, they simply can't make it happen.”

****Maya**** (with a smile):

“If work no longer costs anything, then nothing stands in the way of a truly circular economy. We could manufacture fully recyclable products and the scarcity of raw materials would be a thing of the past.”

****Carlos**** (nodding approvingly):

„Yes, and production cycles could slow down again. No more planned obsolescence, no more constantly new models with useless “new” features that essentially don't improve anything, which ultimately leads to more and more waste, emissions and resource consumption. Instead, we could refocus on durable and high-quality products.“

****Elena**** (gesturing):

“If everything is given away, there is no longer any reason to advertise or persuade people to consume more than they need.“

****Maya**** (winks):

“Of course production would slow down and jobs would disappear. But that's not a problem because everyone would be automatically provided for. There would be no more unemployment.”

****Elena**** (seriously):

“During the first COVID-19 lockdown, many factories were at a standstill, but our basic supply was not at risk. It shows that the economy can shrink without us being in crisis.”

****Maya**** (adds):

“People would adapt quickly. Some would just stay at home longer, others would help where help is needed.”

****Carlos**** (nodding thoughtfully):

“So the idea is that the economy organises itself according to actual needs, not according to what is profitable.”

****Elena**** (winking):

“The compulsion to work for a wage would also be gone, there would be no more bullshit jobs.”

****Max**** (smiling):

"Exactly. Of course, if people from the financial sector all joined, it would quickly become a two- or three-day week."

****Elena**** (doubtfully):

"Now, back to volunteering. Entrepreneurs aren't going to voluntarily stop charging for their goods. What happens if they don't play along?"

****Carlos**** (ironically):

"Yes, I cant really see the CEOs giving everything away. Sounds like it's going to be a tough nut to crack."

****Maya**** (calmly):

“Good point. But after the changeover, they will get everything they need for free – including all raw materials and intermediate products. There is no longer any reason for them to go to the trouble of collecting money. I think that business owners in particular will quickly understand that this system does not disadvantage anyone.”

****Elena**** (insightful):

“That's right. You don't need billions to live a good life. They actually only weigh you down because you always have to make sure that they multiply. I can well imagine that a billionaire also has a perfectly normal family

life. They only have such big expenses because they have to represent in order to stay on the ball.”

****Max**** (concerned):

“But then no more taxes will be paid. How will people in the education sector or in the arts make a living?”

****Elena**** (amused):

“Well, now think about it. If everything is free... Does it click?”

****Maya**** (sarcastic):

“And what if someone is just lazy? Not everyone wants to pursue creative projects or contribute to the greater good.”

****Elena**** (winking):

“That's what people said about the unconditional basic income. If no one has to work, no one will work anymore. But experience shows that most people want to do something useful. It's a myth that people are inherently lazy.”

****Max**** (enthusiastically):

“Just think – people could even pursue their passions. Those who like baking would get up

at four in the morning to prepare delicious rolls and croissants.”

****Maya**** (doubtfully):

“I'm not sure whether the people who grafting in the lithium mines would continue to work there voluntarily.”

****Elena**** (explaining):

“That wouldn't be a problem at first, because people in the Global South are mostly exploited for our extensive lifestyle. Stonewash jeans, plastic toys, peeled shrimps. It wouldn't hurt us at all if we had to do without these luxuries for a while.”

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5. END OF ALIENATION OF LABOUR

****Elena**** (relaxed):

"If work is voluntary, it could completely change its meaning – it becomes an expression of creativity and a contribution to the community."

****Carlos**** (smiling):

"And when no one has to work out of necessity anymore, the value of work will be appreciated quite differently. Motivation will then come from the joy of the activity itself."

****Elena**** (enthusiastically):

“Yes, if I don't have to work just for the sake of earning money, then I can look for a job that I really enjoy and that makes me look forward to the next day in the evening.”

****Maya**** (skeptical):

“But what about the unpleasant jobs? Who would still do them?”

****Elena**** (shrugs):

“We would do it together, out of solidarity, not economic necessity. Everyone's turn comes around eventually. Besides, many tasks could be automated.”

****Carlos**** (nods, determined):

“You're so right. As long as work is paid for, you will always find people who are cheaper than robots. Imagine, after this changeover to voluntary work, many car factories could simply produce robots!”

****Elena**** (in a calm voice):

“This could end the alienation from work that people feel today. Jobs would be better suited to personal talents and interests. Work becomes fulfilling again because it is no longer a means to an end, but a part of life.”

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6. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE PRIVATE PROPERTY?

****Maya**** (curious):

“If there is no more profit, what actually happens to property? Will everything just belong to everyone?”

****Elena**** (reflecting on the past):

“Socialisation of property has already been tried, and it didn't work. What happened to all the social or state owned property when socialism collapsed after 1989? It was simply privatised again. It happened quite unspectacularly.”

Max (confidently):

"Yes, if there is no profit incentive, ownership naturally loses its meaning."

Carlos (curious):

"Actually, you're right. Today, property such as apartments, factories and fields is needed for profit, that is the main function of property."

Elena (amazed):

"But what happens when the profit is gone?"

****Carlos**** (nods):

“If there is no incentive to own apartments, land or factories, then they are just a burden, because the owners are still responsible for them. And they can't sell them because they can't get any more money for them.”

****Maya**** (with raised eyebrow):

“And you think that property would just disappear?”

****Carlos**** (in confirmation):

“Yes, they'll just let go of ownership, ownership will no longer belong to anyone at all, as was the case for most of human history.”

****Max**** (calmly):

"Yes, you're right. It doesn't belong to everyone but to no one. In that case, it would also be much more difficult, from a purely legal point of view, to privatise something again."

****Elena**** (smiling):

"And then 'possession' simply becomes respect for the privacy of others."

****Max**** (smiling):

"A society without property. You're making it hard for me not to dream."

****Carlos**** (somewhat at a loss):

“Why did I go to so much trouble in the past few years to build up my small business?”

****Maya**** (explains):

“You don't have to worry about that at all. Nobody will want to take your business away from you. There's no more competition.”

****Max**** (in agreement):

“Yes, you can fully concentrate on creating a perfect working environment and good working conditions and making your products truly sustainable. Your employees will thank you for it by using all their creativity and energy.” [Table of contents](#)

7. HOW WILL WE LIVE THEN?

****Carlos**** (smiling):

"I'll order a Lamborghini and a Maserati right away and bathe in champagne every evening!"

****Elena**** (laughs):

"I doubt it. People usually behave responsibly unless they are forced to appear better than others."

****Maya**** (in agreement):

"That's right. We said earlier that we behave in an absolutely cooperative manner for a

large part of each day when we are not under the influence of the market.”

****Elena**** (enthusiastically):

“Exactly! We would feel more like we were with family or friends the whole day. After all, we are giving each other gifts.”

****Carlos**** (slightly sceptical):

“But what about progress and innovation?”

****Max**** (thoughtfully):

“Innovation is not driven by competition, but by curiosity and the desire to improve the world. In such a society, advances in science

and technology would be aimed at real needs, rather than throwing products at the market just to sell them.”

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8. EPILOGUE

****Elena**** (dreamily):

“But there is also something positive about competition. Since the Age of Enlightenment, it has brought us up to date with science and technology.”

****Maya**** (somewhat indignant):

“Well not quite, the acceleration of product development, the shortening of lifespan and the associated consumption of resources have been intensifying for 50 years, and these are the main causes of our current problems.”

****Carlos**** (placated):

“If we now remove the financial system's accelerating factor from the economy, we may be able to avoid catapulting ourselves into collapse.”

****Max**** (looking at the setting sun):

“I felt comfortable with capitalism all my life and it would be difficult for me to say goodbye to capitalism.”

****Elena**** (smiling):

“Well, maybe we can keep the term, but financial wealth as capital will be replaced by capital in the form of human knowledge and innovation.”

****Maya**** (thoughtfully):

„You're right, I've always doubted revolutions too. But this isn't a revolution where something is taken away from someone.”

****Elena**** (with the glass in her hand):

„No, not at all. It's a revolution of giving. In the future, we will give to each other, and we won't need elbows for that.“

****Max**** (raises his glass):

„We don't have to give up prosperity at all, and we'll keep our scientific and technical achievements.

We'll simply eliminate the superfluous and artificially generated consumption that the market and the financial system force us to engage in.

We already know that this consumption doesn't make us happier and that it will cover the earth with climate change and wars.“

****Carlos**** (raises his glass in agreement):

“Let's start spreading this idea of a revolution of giving throughout the whole world!”

****Elena and Maya**** (in chorus):

“To Benharmonia and the liberation of capitalism.”

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Eberhard Licht

For further information, see:

<https://LetUsBe.One>

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