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Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated a month before my second birthday. In my memory there is no before, only after.

When I was in elementary school, the second intifada raged on. I learned to play violin as Israeli children learned about fear and death. In middle school, my Hebrew school teacher showed us the scar along his side, a terrible reminder of a suicide bombing in Jerusalem. And in high school, when I went to Israel with my synagogue, the tour guide pointed to the towering gray walls. He explained that they help keep

the terrorists out, so I assumed that everyone on the other side was one.

As I grew up, the Jewish world around me spoke of Rabin as a hero, as a champion of peace, as the true face of Israel and our values. And if I was told about the details of his death, that a Jew had killed him, it was only in passing. No one explained to me why or how that was possible. And when it came to Israel, I was never given the words or means to question or think critically, so I didn't.

The Jewish world around me did not know or refused to believe that anything else died with Rabin. We despaired that there was no partner for peace, that there was no hand extended on the other side, but we did not realize that we had neglected our own outstretched hand. Our arm had grown weak through the years and now hung limp by our side.

Yitzhak Rabin was a hero and champion of peace, but he is no longer the face of Israel. And he is only the face of our values at face value, as long as we do not act on them. We owe it to Rabin's memory to work to repair the tendons and strengthen our muscles so that we can once again extend our hand towards peace.