

Freedom To vs. Freedom From

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“There is more than one kind of freedom, said Aunt Lydia. Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to and freedom from. Now you are given freedom from. Don't underrate it.”

– Margaret Atwood

They said:

You are safe now.

As they locked the door from the outside.

You are protected.

As they clipped her wings,

then asked her to smile

for the men who still had keys.

Aunt Lydia calls it **freedom from**:

Freedom from strangers in alleys,
from lewd tongues and hungry eyes.

But the alley moved inside,
and hunger wore a wedding ring.

She is free, they say,
because she cannot choose.

There is peace in silence,
comfort in obedience—
but only for those who wrote the rules.

What is **freedom to**, then?

To read a page and know it as yours.

To speak without translating your soul
into something palatable, soft.

To love without bartering safety.

To walk into a room and not shrink.

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Offred remembers
the weight of money
in her own pocket—
not because it bought things,
but because it meant she was allowed
to want.

She remembers Luke saying
It's only practical.
And how practicality
became another name for power
that wasn't hers anymore.

Because even love,
when filtered through control,
can bruise.

There is no **freedom from**
when your body is not your own.
No **freedom to**
when saying no makes you disposable.
What is a gift you're punished for opening?

To be free from pain
must not mean free of choice.
To be free to live
must not mean free to harm.

A feminist future is not built
on silent mouths or watched wombs.
It is a room with many doors—
not a cell with velvet curtains.

Anything less
is just another kind of cage.