

PROLOGUE

When I was a child, my grandmother, Nellie Wolff, used to take me to a patisserie opposite Harrods department store in London and reminisce over coffee and cakes, which she could scarcely afford, about her life in prewar Germany. Often she would say, “Dina, when the Wall comes down, and we get back our building in Berlin, we’ll be rich!”

I had no idea what she was talking about.

Her story of an enormous, immensely valuable, building that was rightfully ours was like a fairy tale. She might have been telling me about Jack and the beanstalk or castles in Spain.

I couldn’t imagine that there really was such a building or that when I grew up, I would fight for years to try to win it back for our family.