

1932 Feb 17 Jiryes to Suleiman – put your foot down
Ramallah, Palestine

My dear son, may God protect him,

Greetings, etc. While I am swimming in the sea of worries, I received your dear letter. I took it and hugged it with great happiness, knowing that you and your children are in full health. I thanked the Lord for your safety and for your success in business. If you ask about us, we are in good health; we miss nothing but seeing the light of your beautiful faces.

You tell me, my son, that Katrina is not going according to your wishes. I am telling you that a good man would put his foot down [*put the stone in his fist and hold it tight*], for women are lacking in intellect and religion. Try to be good with her, as much as you can. Try to improve your relations with her as far as possible, for her people are not decent folks. For since the day that we met them, what we have encountered from them is a treatment not experienced by any human being. We would send them bundles of fruits, we would send them these fruits for the elders and the young, six or seven times a year. They cost us 50 or 60 pounds, aside from the food that they have consumed. In return, we received nothing. Since they left, we have not received from them one single letter. They forgot all the favors we have done for them. Anybody who marries their daughters, they would alienate him from his folks. Those people who remain close to his own family, they would divorce their daughters from him. Her sister Liza divorced her husband and they married her to another.

Take care of yourself and your money. Don't give her a single piaster. Do not show her this letter. The letter that you sent was more bitter to me than a stab of a spear and we have all become worried about you. We were all happy with your situation, but now we are very concerned about you. Be careful of her and her family, for she is intent on taking your money in secret in order to give it to her family. I only have to hint about this. Try to appease her until you get what you want from her. And may God protect you. Greetings to your precious soul and please give our greetings to Lady Katrina and to George and Fuad and Julia and Mary. From our end, your mother, myself, your sister and her children send you greetings.

Your father who misses you,
Jiryes Suleiman Farhat
Please answer us immediately,
XXX

P.S. Your nephew (Issa) wants your help. He wants 30 pounds a year so he can go to the Friends School. And send us a pen and a watch and send to my grandpa the address of your in-laws so he can talk to them. Don't show her this letter. My mother and your mother were crying when they read your letter. Please forgive the handwriting because it was written in a hurry. Your nephew who misses you, Issa Yacoub Farhat
Translated by Salim Tamari