

1934 Jan 8 (possibly – date is handwritten in English) Suleiman to Katherine – learn to live with my parents

My dear cousin Katrina, may God protect her.

After kissing your cheeks, etc.,

Business here is not as it should be. Please forgive the lack of writing because during the Christmas we were very busy which explains my lapse. Please forgive me. I was very happy that you have returned to your house [from her family's house in Bethlehem?] You, my dear Im George, are the lady of the house and everything depends on you [primarily] and then to your children and my folks. All their lives they have toiled to leave to us and to their children this property. My father is now very advanced in age and it would be a shame to neglect him. You and I should be very aware of this and do everything for their welfare. If you love me, you must love my folks. Try your best to live with them in peace and affection. I had requested the papers from my father and he indicated that he had sent them. I have now put the shop on the market. As soon as it is sold, I am coming back because this country to me is like poison (like blindness), especially since you [the family] left. I beg you to give up your idea of coming back to this country. If, God forbid, you decide otherwise and come back, think what would happen! For I could sell the shop on short notice and then I will go back to the country while at the same time you will come here. And then you will not find me here and then what would you do alone here? You should always think of this possibility. I beg you, Im George, to clear up your head. As for my father and mother, even if they are fire, your try to understand them and live with them in peace and love. I will be so happy if I received good news from them about you, thanking me about you. As for sending you the money that you requested, I must say that I am afraid that you will use it to come back to this country and I have no intention for you to do that because I am coming back immediately and it is really idiotic for you to think of coming here, which will ruin us. We have lost enough and you know that. I want you to take care of the children and of yourself, and to appreciate my folks and your property. For my dear cousin, we only have each other, and if my folks see that you are devoted to your children and your source of livelihood, they will protect you with their eyes, you and the children. As the proverb says, 'there is nothing dearer than one's children, except one's children's children.' Let this sink into your head. Since you left, until now, all I have been doing from the shop to the house, working all the house every day including Sundays. I only had one Sunday off. I have no intention to buy new merchandise for the amount of business is very low. That is what I have. A thousand greetings to your dear soul and our dear children Fuad, George, and Mary. And greetings to my dear parents. I kiss the hand of my father and my mother and I seek her blessings, and greetings to my dear sister Hilweh and to her dear children Issa and Khadra. From here my cousin Khalil sends you his greetings.

Your cousin [husband] who misses you,
Suleiman Farhat

Translated by Salim Tamari