

6 January 1981

My dearest Tíní¹, solace of my soul

It has been so many months that I have not been able to write you and what months have these been and all that has happened to us, with smiles on our faces and hearts full of anguish on the inside. Well, I do not want to write about these times. I am simply unable and incapable of doing it, nor is there an opportunity to do so. It isn't timely either. We have been caught spinning in the tornado of these events with such ferocity that we are bewildered and perplexed with what is happening. And, well, when we see that this tempest is the Will of God and His Providence, what can be said other than we are content with His will and resigned to His decree.

I am so happy and pleased that you my children have all been successful in your lives. When I hear your happy and joyous voices, I become happy and feel rejuvenated and stronger. Over here, it is I who is the source of consolation and comforter of the hearts, and I know that this is an honor that the Blessed Beauty has laid on my shoulders, to be the patient stone² to whom others turn. All the friends seek me out, whether it is over the phone or in person. All are in need of calm and solace. Then, it becomes essential that I smile and laugh and turn these dreadful and mighty events into small and minuscule happenings, and soften and lessen the crushing pressure that comes and offer calm. God forbid that they detect even a trace of sorrow in my voice. If they do, everything seems to fall apart. Everyone thinks that something terrible must have happened and soon everyone tells everyone else. Then, all of a sudden, the phone calls start pouring in.

Therefore, beloved of my heart, I have not given myself permission to face the friends with anything except a smile and a composed and calm face. And so my love, I run away from any thought of you and your father³ because these make me like everyone else. I begin to feel lonely and worried and these deeply affect me, and it is possible that at that very time a phone call comes, and my voice is not calming and consoling as usual. So, all this intense longing for you that has been building in my inner being and all the worry for your father, these I have had to put away and not deal with until a future time when circumstances ease, and I am permitted the space to have my own thoughts and feelings.

This is why I do not write to you often and seldom talk about you with others. You also do not write, and I have not complained. Only on occasion a letter from Náná⁴, the solace of my soul, arrives. Then the aroma of life lifts up from the pages and I inhale it and realize that out there in the world

¹ Nickname for Artin. The solace of my soul (árám-i-ján) is often used as a term of endearment from a parent to a child. Beloved of my heart ('Azíz-i-dil) is another similar term.

² The patient stone is from Persian mythology and is a magical black stone that when it is put in front of someone, absorbs all their pain and suffering and protects them. When it has absorbed all the individual's pain and troubles, it explodes, thereby setting the individual free from her or his woes.

³ Reference to Mr. Mahmoudi's abduction as part of the first NSA on 21 August 1980

⁴ Nickname for Aryana

people live and flourish, that children grow, and their beings are full of laughter, happiness and life. And of course, after this, I return to my world and where I had started from.

But beyond all this, what we are experiencing here is something no one—neither you nor others—can ever fully understand or experience. This magnificent Will of God flows with such force and power that it at times it feels as though we behold the divine presence with our own very eyes and manifestly see the hand of God as it shapes history—how His Will accomplishes Its objectives one by one. Then, you sense Him inside your heart and very being, leading to your own elevation and loftiness in such wise that you rise above all events and accidents. It is as though you were seated in the balcony of a vast theater, observing and taking in everything. How small and inconsequential everything becomes! These dreadful and major happenings become paltry and trivial. One feels the grandeur of the Will of God reverberating through every cell of one's body.

O beloved of my heart!¹ I am writing strange and astonishing things for you. And I know I should not. Yet, our world is now one of astonishment and bewilderment.

Yesterday, I was on the phone with an old friend. Prior to the revolution we saw each other about once a year but these days the turmoil of events has brought us so close that we have become a family of half a million souls⁵. In this family, there is such closeness of feelings, emotions, and spirit that if in a small and remote corner someone feels dejected, all the limbs and organs of the body of this half million quake. And of course, I sit at the heart of this body and feel this more than anyone else. In any case, with this old friend we were sharing our love for each other as always. Her husband, her sister and her brother-in-law have been imprisoned, and her niece who of course has both parents imprisoned is with her and this friend is running around seeking a solution for all of this. And when I see them, I feel ashamed that I only have one husband in prison! Their spirit of sacrifice is so strong and powerful that you would be astonished.

My beloved, I am rambling on and on⁶. Please fill out the attached form ASAP and send it back to me. The instructions are enclosed also. See how much I had to work to get this, but please hurry so that I can receive it before February 7. I love you and dream about seeing you, Mona, Náná and their children. I am proud of you all. May my life be a sacrifice for you all. Please pray for me for I am in great need of your prayers.

With all my love, Mother

⁵ Refers to the estimated size of the Bahá'í community of Iran at the time of the revolution.

⁶ A Persian form of an apologetic commonly used.