

Letter from Zhinus Mahmudi to her three children, 7 June 1981

My children, my Náná, Mona, and Tíni,

How long is it since I wrote you last? Of course you will forgive me, for Bahá'u'lláh has occupied all my time. Although I am negligent before you, I am proud, too, that my insignificant being and my worthless time, which in those days used to be evaluated with money, is now spent in activities the value of which can never be measured in money or gold.

How I wish I could sit with you awhile and relate to you what is happening and how we are—relating things that sometimes cannot be put into words. And how I wish you could come and, even for a few moments, experience our life with us... Well, my dear children, we are living through inestimable days that produce astonishing feelings in us. This strange life that you cannot count on to last from one minute to the next. Those instances when you step out of the house, and you have to be very alert because you don't know what plans they have in store for you. Those long hours that you sit in meetings with the National Spiritual Assembly or the Board members and assistants, and you never know if the meeting will reach its natural conclusion or not, but you are totally oblivious to the world, to all those amazing events that occur all around us.

The new creation that has come into being among the followers of His Greatest Name [Bahá'ís] in this land of calamities—and it is very, very new—altogether are not the same people who were before. They have no resemblance to others around them. With faces calm or cheerful, their heads are held high with the pride of the sacrifices of their fathers or sons, and with the pride of suffering hardship for the sake of the Ancient Beauty and in His Name. They laugh when they receive their dismissal notices from their jobs while their whole livelihood depends on that paycheck at the end of the month.

I am not able to describe to you these conditions in one or two or even a hundred pages. There were those who were so remote that we didn't know them; we didn't even count on them. But now they affirm their attachment to the Name of the Blessed Beauty with joy and celebration. There were a couple almost at the point of breaking up because the wife was not dismissed from her job and the husband thought that she had failed to state her Faith explicitly. But all was well, and they made up when her expulsion order finally arrived.

They are so prepared that if everything they have is taken from them, they still smile and go on creating a new epic. Our small children, our flourishing youth, our men and women—each and every one is a hero. It is only in these days that you can see with your eyes the grandeur of Baha'u'llah's education, and see the contrast between the people who are created and nurtured and perfected by Him, and those who have not had a share of His Holy Fragrance. How different they are! The more difficult things get and the greater hardships become, the greater is the sense of the grandeur of the Faith, and the patience and fortitude of these wonderful servants, and the deeper their love.

You should see the solidarity and the concord that exists among us today. With all the difficulties I really wish that you could be here and experience these feelings yourselves; then you could almost touch the purpose of Bahá'u'lláh's manifestation. You could become acquainted with this new generation that must construct the future civilization of the world.

At the end of this past week I was with the prisoners in Hamadan for two and a half hours—right there in their jail cell¹. The thing you never sense at all is the existence of the jail itself. It seemed to me that I was at the best and most cheerful party. And how long they had been there! I cannot write everything, and anyway with pen and paper it is impossible to describe all those feelings that come over you. In their calm and smiling faces there was nothing but the surging of waves of contentment and submission to His Will. You could not believe that they were in prison. Their cell was neat and clean. Their bedrolls were all tied up and gathered against the walls. They spread their blankets on the floor for me to sit on. They offered me sweets, tea. They showed me their handicraft creations over which they had labored and made with so much art and delicacy. You cannot believe so much art and beauty from people who, when they were outside, had not a moment for such things. Then you ask yourself, what kind of thoughts and feelings can give birth to such beauty, except serene thoughts and rarefied and beautiful feelings. Their whole being is replete with love—love for their Beloved and love for people—the very people who show nothing these days except harshness and cruelty. It is as if such people had been transformed and only wanted to kill, to destroy.

Ah, those Hamadan friends—may I offer up my life for all of them, for every one of them, for all their heroism and sacrifice that has set forward the Cause by two hundred years. How I feel insignificant before the greatness of their being. It is the fruit of their lives that has brought about such changes in the world. I and the likes of me on the outside run around, doing the same things we did before. It's no feat. The heroic feat belong to them, and to those whom we have not seen yet and don't even know their whereabouts, but whose existence we sense. You may have difficulty understanding this sentence, because I am sure you have not experienced this sensation. But I, my dear children, sense that Daddy exists. Daddy is right around, close by. I sense his existence with a sixth sense, or seventh, or tenth, I don't know; but he exists. And the rest of them, too, I sense their being. Sometimes I even seem to sense whether on that day they are well and happy or they are in discomfort. I feel that today Daddy is very tired of waiting. I feel they are saying to themselves, why is nothing happening? Why is there no news from anyone? Why doesn't their waiting come to an end so they can go back to their tasks?

Sometimes I feel that my turn will come too—and why not? It won't come only if at other times too I should be spared by His Will, as I have been so far. But then, I don't dwell on such thoughts. They don't fit in with my difficult and heavy schedule. When that time comes, I'll adjust myself to it. My feelings, dear children, are complete submission and total dedication. Only one thing counts: to do the work that I must do. And what pleasure is hidden in these tasks, this, too, I cannot really describe for you. Nor can you truly comprehend it, because I, too, had not tasted it until now; and I only wish that He not take this pleasure away from me as long as I am alive. It is higher than kingship—greater than any gratification. You are working with Baha'u'llah, and sense His Being, and you see that it is He Who gives the commands, He Who chooses the paths and Who solves the difficulties, and never leaves me alone.

My dear children, I don't want to write you more about these matters. I only want you to know that I lack nothing. There is no sorrow—absolutely no difficulties. I am content, well, fortunate, assured, serene, full of energy, and thankful. Whatever should happen, there could be nothing better. I am sure your Daddy, too, has the same feeling. Many people feel this way today. I wish that you, too, could comprehend our joys. When I am so full of contentment, then

¹ The prisoners were tortured and executed six days after this letter was written, bringing to an end some ten months of imprisonment.

I am afraid—afraid that my call for working, serving, and sacrifice may come to an end and my portion be filled. My children, with your pure hearts pray that what He has given us with His bounty He not take away with His justice. Don't you ever think that what has passed with us (or will come to pass, the grandeur and the intensity of which I sense—and its dread) was a hardship or an unbearable pressure. No, it's just the opposite. He has removed all the pressures from us. He has lightened us so much that we can soar. And right now we are prepared to endure a hundred times more. Only pray that we may be worthy to endure.

I love you. The desire to see you – which is an unattainable desire now—whenever it comes over me, it makes my whole being tremble. Who knows, maybe it can happen some day. Every night and morning I say special prayers for you; and this selfishness is my only selfishness....

Mother

