(First Letter)

My dear friend,

I received your gracious letter and the 1,090 koroner that you sent for travel money, as well. Thank you. I can't help but appreciate your noble gesture and kind thoughts. I regret that both you and those like you were not in a position four years ago to deal with these matters. Had that been the case, then this country would not have been fallen into the very purposeless situation it finds itself in and, in fact, the destructive discord that prevails. Perhaps some tragedies would have been avoided. In any event, the past is in the past.

Because my interlocutor is an honorable and knowledgeable soldier, I am putting in writing what I told you verbally. What I have done consists of the requisite forceful reciprocal writings against the attacks that were visited upon me for no good reason. Essentially, the motivation of this opposition to me is neither idealistic nor is it based on some other philosphical anxiety. It is just the absurd thoughts or jealousies of Nâzim Bey, Câhid Bey and Babanzâde Bey. Literary competition, especially in our country, is ugly and vulgar, like all competition. At one time, the Hâlet Efendi's and the Akif Paşa's endeavored to have each other hung in this way. The Naci's and the Ekrem Bey's of an earlier time were similarly mortal enemies. We are on this same path of this profession. Otherwise, you can be sure that at the start of our revolution this humble writer would have been the most serious servant and wellwisher of İttihâd ve Terakkî ((Committee of Union and Progress/CUP)) at İkdam.

In accordance with Cevdet Bey's request, yesterday I began to write for İkdam again. You can be sure that I will never abandon the profession I mentioned above (break) nor will I ever be made captive by ambition. Once I am back at work I will be wary of politics and must confine myself to writing about literature and history.

17 February 1913

Ali Kemal

(Second Letter)

My dear friend,

I received your gracious letter. I appreciate your thoughts and you patriotic efforts and I pray with all my heart for your success. You can be certain that the things I said to you when I was in Istanbul were quite sincere. If there is anyone in this world who has been aggrieved by this discord of ours it is me. Similarly, no one is more pleased than I with regard to the gradual amelioration you are arduously working to achieve. I have seen that, like you, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, whom you love, also appreciates my efforts toward this favorable result.

Ahmed Cevdet Bey is a man who says what he thinks. He does not suffer fools. But when he saw your initial activities in Adana and then, since you began writing in İkdam, he has spoken sincerely of your virtues and talents at every opportunity. Lately, because he has received a flurry of news from his manager ((editor?)), he is focused on İkdam's

discontinuation, but since he has faith in your justness he is consoled and tolerates the editor's exaggerated writings.

I must thank you for securing a job for me. Firstly, however much you can trouble yourself, and although it may be problematic, I ask that you give me an advance on my future salary and send it to me now so that I can be relieved of the difficulties I find myself in currently.

I understand and appreciate your sincerity and good conscience, based on your acts and your written words. Nevertheless, after quite a bit of hesitation I mustered the courage to write to you about my personal situation and I beg your pardon. As Fethi Bey witnessed at one time, Cavid Bey, Cahid Bey and Nazım Bey have been thinking that I have been quietly living my life in a corner of Europe, out of favor and disgraced. But you have actively refuted this and I am grateful. That is why I am sure that you will grant my request. In fact, I'm quite embarrassed that I've gone into such detail about everything. I hope that you will excuse these words I've written to you because they are sincere. I pray for your good fortune and success dear sir.

4 April 1913

Vienna

Ali Kemal

(Third Letter)

My dear friend,

I received your gracious letter and the enclosure. Thank you. In accordance with your instructions, I will return to Istanbul soon. My faith is your humaneness is total, to the extent that I can say that if there were five or ten others as sincere and virtuous as you, this luckless nation would be rescued for certain.

Yes, we are all more or less guilty and we must concede this truth. That being the case, we must wipe the past from our minds and think about the future. Henceforth, we must put an end to our painful discord. I will tell you about these ideas of mine verbally.

Wednesday, 20 April 1913

Transcribed by Prof. Dr. İlhan Şahin, Istanbul, and translated by Jack Snowden, Istanbul, October 2023.