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East Elmhurst 69, N.Y.
March 25, 1959

As-Salaam-Alaikum

In the Holy Name of ALLAH, the Beneficent, the Merciful, to whom all praise is due; whom we forever thank for giving us the most Honorable ELIJAH MUHAMMAD.

My Dear Holy Apostle:

I do not like to burden you with personal troubles of my own, but I feel obligated to you to enclose the facts that are contained in this letter. It is you (thanks to ALLAH) who made me what I am today, and I owe my life and my entire being to you; even though I know all praise is due to ALLAH. Therefore, since you are responsible for me I owe it to you to let you know my condition (both good and bad) at all times, and this I have tried to do ever since I've been following you. That is why my letters often are very long. **I never want to displease you.**

I did not give you all of the facts on my domestic affairs. You once told me that you judge according to the facts presented to you. Thinking that as a man, a Muslim, and as a minister that I was automatically responsible and to blame for whatever condition my domestic affairs had fallen to I in no way said anything at any time to make my wife look bad or to make her look to blame. But in attempting to carry the complete load with no explanation whatsoever of what made me act as I have, I now see would be doing myself some injustice.

I have never made love to Sister Lucille nor to Minister Robert's Sister (Betty Sue). I did propose marriage to Sister Betty Sue, but never made love to her, nor do I think that I ever even told her that I loved her. My proposal was governed by a suggestion to me, but when I learned it to be only a suggestion I quickly tried to get out of it, for which I recognize my error (in building her hopes). Of the above Sisters, Sister Evelyn is the only one who had a legitimate beef against me...and I do bear witness that if she complains she is justified...(and also Betty Sue, for me breaking my word).

Most brother^s who follow you are slow to get married. This is not because they are against women, but because you make us see the place of the man and the great responsibility involved to a Sister after marrying her. If a brother means right by a believing Sister he has to move slowly to keep from involving himself in a role that he can't fulfill to the Sister's satisfaction...and one's eyes don't have to be too far open to see that it is no easy task to satisfy women of today.

This creates the situation where the Sisters are more forward and aggressive in seeking husbands than the brothers are in seeking wives. I mention this not out of argument, disrespect, disagreement, nor to justify...but to point toward and shed more light on what created my own situation. I am not without blame or fault; and have many weaknesses. You once told me (five years ago) that one doesn't hunt wild game in the thick brush and not get ones hunting suit torn or ones flesh scratched, and most of my humble efforts have been in the thickest of brush among the wildest of game. Only ALLAH has saved me from being scratched and wounded unto death.

I stayed single a long time because I knew my own weaknesses and shortcomings, and felt that marriage would blunt my effectiveness. I just could not see where I could devote the time to a sister that is demanded by the women of today...so I ducked, dodged, twisted, turned, and ran from marriage as long as I could.

When I did marry it was at a time of great mental and spiritual weakness on my part. Despite that I didn't marry on the spur of the moment as everyone thought. No one knows better than I how forward, fast, and aggressive even a Muslim Sister can be...and I was the target increasingly, and not because I gave them hopes, as they now would have it seem. But I did see that I was weakening under the strain, and at the time I wrote and told you.

So I decided to get married. I didn't marry on the spur of the moment. I deliberated long, and selected carefully. I chose Betty over the others for many reasons, (and even right now I think she beats all the rest of them). She was physically strong, near my height, looked something like me, and seemed to be able to produce children that would be strong and resemble us both. Plus she seemed intelligent, and had training qualifications that could be helpful to me in my work; and she was the darkest of the three (she, Betty Sue and Evelyn) and I don't go too much for real light women as a wife.

What then started our down hill marriage?

Betty had some debts that I knew nothing about until after marriage. I didn't want her to think she had married a "good thing" so I let her of her own free will continue to work and pay them off. That was one of my main mistakes, because she soon wanted me to chauffeur her to work at 6:A.M. every morning, which I outright refused to do. She had other luxurious tastes which I immediately began to curb. I really did keep her in "jail" financially (compared to what she had been used to) which did cause much discontent also, at the outset.

But the main source of our trouble was based upon SEX. She placed a great deal more stress upon it than I was physically capable of doing. Please forgive me for this topic, but I feel compelled to tell you of it, and would tell it to no one else but you. At a time when I was going all out to try and keep her satisfied (sexually), one day she told me that we were incompatible sexually because I had never given her any real satisfaction.

From then on, try as I may I began to become very cool toward her. I didn't ever again feel right (free) with her in that sense, for no matter how happy she would act I'd see it only as a pretense. She could sense that she was losing her hold over me, which by nature made her then begin to resort to various female tricks to try and get around the barrier that was becoming between us. She would become furious when she couldn't exercise her will over mine, and resort to pouting, crying and every other tactic...but the gap just got wider and wider.

Its easier for a woman to pretend than for a man. She stayed miserable during her expectancy, and those were the nine most miserable months of my life too...she often cursed the day she married and of being pregnant, and she cursed me too. I don't blame her in that sense, because instead of trying to pacify (baby) her during those fits, I just withdrew farther from her. It was not that I didn't have love and compassion for her, but that she was driving me just as crazy as she was acting.

Many a night she screamed and hollered until 5 o'clock in the morning, and I know the neighbors and other Muslims in the house must know it, tho they don't speak of it, so I never tried to hide it. One of the things that made it worse, my not intending to be ruled by a woman...and most of the times when she would be throwing fits purposely, it would make me so cold hearted, and drive me so far away from her, that when her fit was "for real" it was difficult for her to break through the wall that I had erected.

Things got so bad between us that I stopped sleeping in the same bed with her the last 3 months of her pregnancy until 3 months after her pregnancy (when she returned from Chicago). We wer far apart when she went to Chicago for those two weeks.

She would always talk of packing her bag and leave, until I started agreeing with her that I think it best too, then she'd change. Which made me really see that much of her screaming was just plain "female characteristics"...and she was always talking about getting a divorce, until I started agreeing, then again I'd see the same reaction. This made me reach the conclusion that she'd just use that to upset me. Whenever she is leaving for a vacation somewhere (especially Chicago) then she gets very lovey dovey, confessing all her faults and promising to do better when she returns...and I think she always really means it.

I had stopped all sexual relations with her. Shortly after her return from Chicago, she said to me that if I didn't watch out she was gding to embarrass me and herself (which under questioning she later said she was going to seek satisfaction elsewhere). So I renewed relations with here (after six months of abstinence). Again she this time outright told me that I was impotent...and even tho I could father a child I was like an old man (not able to engage in the act long enough to satisfy her).

I had a frank discussion with her, and told her for the first time that this was the source of all our troubles. Her remarks like this were very heart breaking to me (and would be to any other man). I explained that even if a woman thinks a man is not a man sexually, she should never tell him that, especially her husband, because from then on he will always think she is pretending no matter how she acts...and will take the whole act as just another waste of time. No matter what she says after that the words have such a strong psychological effect that it stays on my mind as a man...and by you being a man I think you can understand what I mean.

Bro Secretary John and his family share this apartment with me, and his wife and mine treat each other with intense hostility. They can be in the same kitchen, cooking on the same stove, and never speak. Because I wont side with my wife when these little "cat" action come up, this also causes her upset. But I think the reason the two sisters don't get along is they both want their husbands (John and I) to go to great expense (and debt) to get them seperate homes. The crowded conditions under which we live have only added to our antagonistic attitude toward each other.

As a man, a Muslim, and a minister my home life has been so far from Muslim like that I have had difficulty for some time getting the spirit to teach when I'm in New York. I purposely sent Betty to spend those two weeks in Chicago before the Convention, so she could get light from you on all phazes of our domestic life that were shaky...but instead she pretended like everything was alright, which solved nothing because we came back and did worse.

I wasn't complaining to your wife because I wanted my business in the street, but I even told her that I was telling her so she could tell you at a time when you were relaxed and free from the pressure of some of your other problems. By her being right there with you, she could more easily tell when you are free from other wobbles...and it really is heart breaking to me when I have to tell you of my personal troubles.

In closing I'd like to point out that I'm not finding fault with Betty, for I think she's only doing what all other Sisters would do and the way they'd react under the same circumstances. In fact, I think she has stood up longer and better with me than most of the others would who may be quick to condemn her or me. If there is any difference, it is in me...for as a man most men would not even be affected by these things, but my own past life has created psychological factors in my makeup that are difficult for me to overcome.

Betty is the only Muslim that I've ever been very very mean to, and she is my wife, which makes it all the more hurting to me. My marriage life has made me feel so bad (and oftimes guilty) that I've stayed out there on the highway in rain and snow going from temple to temple, rather than face things here at home.

Please forgive the language and topic of this letter. I write it out of all due love and respect for you, as Our Beloved Leader and Teacher from the Lord of the Worlds...and the only man who could have picked someone such as I up out of the mud and made me a respectful person. I pray ALLAH I have not caused you too much disappointment and displeasure.

I write meekly, humbly, and respectfully to you hoping that a knowledge of this will enable you to speak to my wife from any angle and upon any subject that you choose while she is there...and get her side of the story. I had a frank discussion with her before leaving, but she does not know the topic or contents of this letter. I have complete faith in whatever way you wish or may chose (or may not) to take it up with her.

Whatever you may think of me, I do at least feel better now.

As-Salaam-Alaikum
your brother and servant

PS: May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you.

I humbly and sincerely submit to Allah and His Messenger