

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

TRAGIC end of a TURKISH WRITER

“SABAHATTİN ALİ”

DURING COLD WAR ERA

By

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CAST

Sabahattin Ali: Turkish novelist and story writer. About 40 years of age.

Ali Ertekin: Discharged junior officer, who claims to have murdered Sabahattin Ali. About 40 years of age.

Man in Mask: Identity not known. From the beginning to the end of the play, he covers his face with a mask that gives him a serious look.

Aliye: Sabahattin Ali's wife

Filiz: Sabahattin Ali's daughter.

Süheyla: Sabahattin Ali's sister.

Talip Apaydın: Writer.

Ünsal: A childhood friend of Sabahattin Ali.

Naci: A childhood friend of Sabahattin Ali.

Sevgi Sanlı: Translator, Sabahattin Ali's pen friend.

Nihal Atsız: Ex-teacher, racist, Turanist.

Hasan İzzettin Dinamo: Poet and writer.

Nazım Hikmet: Poet and writer.

Zekeriya Sertel: Owner of Tan Newspaper, journalist.

Nail Çakırhan: Poet/architect.

Hüseyin: A convict from Sinop Prison.

Ayşe: Teacher, Sabahattin Ali's friend.

Nahit: Teacher, one of Sabahattin Ali's beloved women.

Mediha Esenel: Faculty member.

Mehmet Baha: A friend of Sabahattin Ali from School of Education

Niyazi Ağırnaslı: Politician, a friend of Sabahattin Ali from military service.

Mehmet: One of Sabahattin Ali's relatives.

Veli Demiröz: A teacher from Village Institute

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Aziz Nesin: Humorist.

Rıfat Ilgaz: Humorist.

Haluk Yetiş: Director of Markopasha Newspaper

Mehmet Ali Cimcoz: Lawyer.

Hasan Tural: Barber, an immigrant from Bulgaria.

Rasih Nuri İleri: Investigative writer, friend of Sabahattin Ali.

Müzehher Va-Nu: A close family friend

Kemal Bayram: Journalist, writer.

Şükrü Polat: Lieutenant in the army.

Zeki Kayraklı: Intelligence Officer

Küçük Filiz: Sabahattin Ali's daughter about 7-8 years old.

Kadın: Ali Ertekin's wife

Cemal Kutay: Journalist

Melek Celal: A rich woman.

Minister.

Judge

Important note: *One actor may play more than one character.*

SCENE

From the audiences view, the benches are arranged on the left, right and at the center of the stage for all the cast members except for the victim (Sabahattin Ali) and the defendant (Ali Ertekin). They will sit in designated two chairs in the middle of the stage. Also right across from the audience there is an elevated stage area where the man in mask resides at all times.

YEAR: 1907-1978

PLACE: TURKEY

ACT I

The man in mask, a mask that gives him a serious look, takes his place on the stage. Throughout the play, sometimes he will go through some files, take and place phone calls and at times he will watch other players on the stage. Sabahattin Ali and Ali Ertekin, he who claims to have murdered Sabahattin Ali, take their designated places in the middle of the stage. With the start of the music, Ali Ertekin puts on a 'smiling' mask. Hiding a stick behind him, he starts walking around Sabahattin Ali, waiting for just the right moment...And he suddenly starts hitting hard on Sabahattin Ali's head with the stick. Few more strikes...Sabahattin Ali collapses and lies dead on the floor. Music Stops. Ali Ertekin takes Sabahattin Ali's ring off of his finger and puts it in his own pocket. He goes through

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Sabahattin Ali's pockets and finds his wallet and notices the money in it. He puts the wallet in his pocket also. Grabbing Sabahattin Ali's suitcase he walks away from the scene.

The rest of the players take their seats on both sides of the stage where they will remain until the end of the play. Ali Ertekin has taken his mask off and he has sat in his designated chair. *(the light will focus on the acting player)*

HASAN İZZETTİN DİNAMO: I am Hasan İzzettin Dinamo. I was reading the newspaper in the morning, and the news caught my attention: "On June 16, 1948 a shepherd named Şükrü from the city of Kırklareli's Üsküp county, notifies Gendarmerie Headquarters that while he was grazing his animals, he found a dead body in a ditch that is 50 Km. away from the road of Hediye Village which he thinks has been dead for four to five months. Upon his notification an investigation has started, however the identity of the body has not been determined yet."

SABIHA SERTEL: Sabiha Sertel... Six months later a statement from the Istanbul Police department appeared in the newspapers: "During an investigation of an organization that is believed to smuggle people into Bulgaria, a discharged breached sergeant named Ali Ertekin has been suspected to have connection to the organization and brought to the police headquarters for interrogation. At his interrogation on 28 December 1948, Ali Ertekin has claimed to be the murderer of the dead body found, which he also claims to be Sabahattin Ali's body."

TALİP APAYDIN: We had been drafted to the army service, and I was assigned as a sergeant by the order of the Ministry. With our backpacks on, we were being trained in great exertion on Ayaş mountains. There were no newspapers to read, so we had no idea what was happening in the world. The lieutenant yelled during a training session: "Talip Apaydın!" "Come here!" I assumed he would stand me up in front of him, curse, threaten and give me a long speech as usual. I ran up to him right up on his order, and stood at his attention. He had a newspaper in his hand. I could never detect a trace of smile on his face normally, but he had a dark smile on his face this time. He waved the newspaper and added: "Do you know that one of your guys have been zapped?" He handed the newspaper to me, and walked away with his hands crossed on the back. My heart started pounding and my vision getting dark. I was hardly standing up. I set down on a small mound to read. I could hardly see the headline of the news: "The Communist writer Sabahattin Ali has been murdered at the border of Bulgaria while trying to escape the country." *(as the light focuses on Sabahattin Ali, all players on the stage)*

LAMENT FOR SABAHATTİN ALİ

We gave the lamb to the wolf,
save him we said.
What a pity it could not!
he was left in executioner's hands

The soft face of infidelity
Deceived him insidiously
How could he believe them?
He gave his life to a smile

Puskin and Gorky on one side,

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Nesimi on the other.
And his reading glasses on one side,
the killer stick on the other

Is it worthy of him
to die like this?
What did he dream of all his life
other than a beautiful world?

Yet, is it possible to murder
a man like him?
Can the world he created
also be buried with him?

ALİ ERTEKİN: (*Stands up. He seems very nervous. He acts as if he is answering questions at a trial. Sound of a typewriter...*)

Ertekin...

Ali...

Yaşar...

Ayşe...

Üsküp. I was born in Kartal county of Üsküp...In Yugoslavia. I live in Istanbul...In Anadolu Hisarı, in Yenimahalle...

I am married, I have a son...

I murdered Sabahattin Ali, but I did not murder him intentionally. I just wanted to knock him down so I could have him arrested. Did not do this to take his money or belongings. I did it because of my patriotic emotions...I believe I have served my country by doing this, and I expect applause from you all!

MAN IN MASK: (*reads from a file that is in front of him*) Sabahattin Ali was born in Eğridere county of Gümülcine on 25 February, 1907. His father, Ali Selahattin of Cihangir, was an infantry lieutenant. His mother, Hüsniye, was a Circassian from Caucasia. Hüsniye's father was also an army officer.

(*he closes the file, marks a cross on it, and places on the side.*)

SABAHATTİN ALİ (*as if chatting with a journalist*)

When my parents got married, my father was thirty and my mother was fourteen years old. In other words, my father was sixteen years older than my mother. I was born as the first child of the family in Eğridere. Do you want to know why my father named me Sabahattin? As you know fathers tend to name their children after their political heroes. So children's names usually carry in them a hint from their fathers political tendency. Well, because my father was such an advocate of Prince Sabahattin's ideas, he named me after him! My father was so proud of having met Prince Sabahattin personally. My brother's name is Fikret. He gets his name from the famous poet Tevfik Fikret: another hero of my father. I could say my father was an open minded army officer who loved literature. He was also fond of Young Turks. He was a partisan of freedom. He knew many of Tevfik Fikret's poems by heart, especially his famous poem 'The Fog'. He would recite it anywhere, at any occasion when he had a chance.

(*just like his father*)...

Again the horizon has been covered by a persistent fog,

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It is a white darkness that progressively enlarges.
Everything under it, looks as if erased,
Like a dense collection of dust are the pictures formed.
Such a dusty and fearsome density that
no eyes can dare see through.
You deserve this deep and dark cover,
You deserve this covering, you, the land of cruel
You, the land of cruel, you, the bright stage...

To the never ending great lies
To the rights being exiled from the courts
To the people who have lost sensible feelings out of fear and suspicion
To the curious ears stretching up to the consciences of people
To the mouths locked out of fear of being listened
To the forgotten face of honor and shame
To the great, famous people who have been doubled up
by the heavy load of fear on their shoulders...
To the heads bowed down,
clear looking heads may be, but disgusting.
To those desolate children...
To those double faced laughters...
Cover yourself up, you, the disaster! Cover yourself up, you, the city!
Cover yourself up and sleep to the eternity
You, the bastard world!

My father would read such prints like *Servet-i Fünun, Sahbal and İctidat*. He had taught me to read even one year before I started elementary school, so I knew he had collected all the issues of these prints. He was interested in music also. He could play mandolin and flute. You could tell he was a multi-talented person... My mother, Hüsniye, was a beautiful, attractive woman. She enjoyed dressing up. She would read novels all the time. However, she would quarrel with my father constantly. She was never kind to my father. She was very aggressive towards him, and she would always find a way to create incidents at home.

I think she loved my little brother Fikret more than she loved me. She had spoiled him. When I turned seven years old, I started elementary school in Istanbul, but after my parents moved to Çanakkale I continued my education in Çanakkale. My father had rented a house at The Dardanelles. Our schools were closed due to World War I, because there were no teachers left at school. It was not long before the schools were re-opened, but this time the teachers were military officers. My father was teaching Turkish at school. He would drink a double of Rakı every night, and just before going to his bed he would whisper in my ear: "I am going to sleep, your mother is losing it again!" My mother and Fikret would sleep early also. I would always sit on the balcony and watch the idle vessels or the few ships trying to pass through the Dardanelles... One night after everyone went to sleep, I got out of my bed and went out to the balcony again. The cannons that were situated in Dardanelles like iron fists to block the way to Istanbul were at their everyday location. Like dark silhouettes were the cannons. Although, according to my father, they were there for our security; they were frightening. I especially preferred watching the ships that were resting in the moonlight and dream. That was what I was doing again. I was dreaming of getting on the ship and going to far away places. Then, I was not willing to go alone. I wanted my father to come with me. But never my mother! Because she always fights with my father. I did not

want my little brother either. He could stay with mom since my mom loves him more anyway. As I was having these thoughts, Fikret suddenly appeared next to me. Apparently, he could not sleep either. "Can I stay here with you?" he asked. "Sure" I said. He quietly sat next to me. He was trying to be quiet even while he was taking breath. I guess he knew I did not like my dreams to be interrupted. So, he was watching the ships with me.

(Everywhere starts lighting up suddenly. Then gets dark right after...Then noises like whistle... And than the guns and bombs. As if he lives what he tells...)

Fikret immediately grabbed my hand. Poor child was shaking with fear. His eyes were wide open. I guess he was trying to understand what was happening. I wrapped my arms around him. We stayed just like that...Frozen... Bombs started dropping near the ships... As the bombs were splashing in the sea, tall and white water columns, just like minarets, were being formed towards the sky. The ships were trying to escape...One gets hit!

(Suddenly uproar breaks out in the sky)

Airplanes are approaching...Oh my God! Where is my father? Why is he not coming to rescue us? People are jumping in to the sea from the targeted ships. They are trying to swim to the shore to save themselves. Fikret has almost gotten himself glued to me. He is shaking. Oh no, you can't call this shaking he is trembling out of fear.

First my father, than my mother came running to us. Mom grabbed Fikret, and dad grabbed me. We are heading to the streets. People are fleeing away on carriages. They are leaving the city. We get on a carriage too. Mom starts accusing dad: "You forgot the blankets!" Dad goes back home without saying a word, and comes back with blankets...

Together with all disoriented, confused people we are away from the city now. We can barely hear the noises now. Then no noise can be heard anymore... Then, Fikret to my mom: "I am... I am... I am... I am cold." That night Fikret started to stutter.

Few months later, dad resigned from his work due to serious heart problems he had developed. Mother's hysteria had gotten worse. I was the only normal person in the family. One day my dad said "It is impossible to live here anymore. The bombshells won't likely to stop. We shell move to İzmir..."

ALİ ERTEKİN: I don't remember my father's profession. We were running away from the Balkans War. We were planning to go to Komanova. Folks around us were telling us such things like "Don't even go because you are too late already" And my father would say "No matter what, we are going away" I remember all of this, because I was six years old then. We had arrived to a place called Çavuşköy where we started hearing first gun shots. We were eleven males. One of them was from Albania. Even Albanian women had guns. I was riding on a horse and others were on their foot. We were under fire! The opposite group was constantly firing on us. I saw a woman get hit. She dropped her baby on a side and she was fluttering. We were trying to get ahead but the gunfire was getting denser. Our men were also firing when my father screamed "Oh my God!" He was shot by his foot. So, I was taken off the horse so my father could get on. I was praying for my father. I did not want him to die. That night we settled by a small creek near a watermill. The opposite group surrounded us. They were large in number. My father tried to sneak away from us, but it was not long before we heard gunshots again. Later we learned that it was my father who was shot to death. Our men wrapped their guns with white cloth to hoist the white flag to surrender. However, a priest came by the creek and started firing on us with his rifle. A corporal from Rama yelled to the priest "We surrender, we surrender" Then he held his hands up in the air. The priest filled his gun few more times; fired again. We all lied flat on the ground. Later we were taken to a Turkish Home. All of us were being heaped up in that house. Later that night, three men with guns appeared. They talked to our men and left. At dawn in the morning, women

suggested that no men should get out. We did not listen to them and all of the men were killed other than I. They looked at me, and thought I was too young so they spared my life.

SABAHTİN ALİ: We settled in İzmir. Father had saved some money. He worked as a manager in a playhouse for a while. Then he ran a night club for a while in Karşıyaka. However, Greeks were in İzmir suddenly...My father's business went down. We were penniless one more time. My mother's mental problem was getting worse...That night father went to sleep early again and mother was in the living room. Suddenly, Fikret came running to me. He looked terrified. He was trying to tell me something. Mother... mother...has... has... cut...cut...I immediately ran to living room. Mother was lying flat on the floor on her back. Her left wrist was bleeding heavily. I briskly went to wake up father. He came running. He wrapped her wrist with a cloth and was trying hard to stop the bleeding. He with a helpless voice asked me to call the doctor next door. Fortunately, the doctor came and was able to save mother's life. We were helpless! Father decided to move to Edremit where my grandparents lived. While on the ship to Edremit, mother attempted another suicide by trying to jump off the ship. With the help of the passengers we were once again able to save mother. Finally; we arrived in Edremit and moved in with my mother's parents. Unfortunately Greeks were also here in Edremit, so father wasn't even able to get his retirement payments. He was trying everything he could to bring money to his family. On the other hand, mother was still able to find reasons for quarrelling with my father every night. In fact, not only was she fighting with my father, she was also quarrelling with her own parents. No days passed without fighting. She was cursing my poor father's parents too... "You are not good for anything but sleeping! You ruined my youth! Why aren't your parents helping us? Because they are also inferior people like you." Father never said anything back to mother. He would only listen. But sometimes he would tell me quietly that he bared all this because of us... In the midst of all of this, my baby sister Süheyla was born!

SÜHEYLA: I remember my father very well. He was an open minded, farsighted man of principles. He was a very imaginative and incredibly witty person. He loved music. As for my mother, she came from a conservative family. She could never keep up with my father's colorful personality. The distance between them remained unchanged throughout their life. Depression ruined her life also. I think the age difference was one of the reasons of their incompatibility, but the main reason was the difference in their cultural background. Mother and my brother Sabahattin never got along either, but regardless of this he always helped mother in anyway he could. Although, Sabahattin was having monetary problems of his own, one day he told my younger brother Fikret "If I don't send money to mother even only for a single month, the reason must be that I am dead" Mother lived her life in tears after Sabahattin's death.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: We were getting on a tighter budget... As you all know well, newborns need to be nourished well...We had an aide from Edremit when we were in Çanakkale. He owned a variety shop now. Father bought socks, handkerchiefs, sweaters, reels from him on credit and began selling them in the market square.

ÜNSAL: My name is Ünsal. I am Sabahattin Ali's childhood friend...With his fair skin, hazel eyes and wavy hair, was a beautiful kid Sabahattin Ali... His neighbors in his Muslim neighborhood had given him a nick name: Morning Star! He was a bit withdrawn child. He could hardly be seen on the streets or playing with kids. He was a withdrawn child. He was friends with

Şerif Ağa's son Ali. Ali would always protect Sabahattin from bully boys for he was a husky boy. In fact once he had stopped Şakir when he attempted to hit Sabahattin. Sabahattin Ali's mother was an angry woman... She was closer to her younger son Fikret. She would scold Sabahattin on all occasions and even would spank him sometimes. His mother's biased behavior was hurting Sabahattin deeply. Thus, he was attached to his father. He could understand the struggle his dad was having to bring home a loaf of bread. After all his dad was going through, watching his mother fight with his dad was damaging him deeply. He found his father's drinking habit normal because of this.

Sabahattin was one of the best students at Edremit Elementary school. Although he was quiet and withdrawn he was a very bright and hardworking student. In fact at times he would give lectures to his class when the teacher was absent. His uncle Nazmi Bey loved Sabahattin dearly. He would come to visit Sabahattin often, and bring him books. Sabahattin would read these books with a great passion...

Barber Hüseyin Efendi's bookstore was another place Sabahattin could find books to read. Hüseyin Efendi was an educated, knowledgeable and affectionate person. By all means, he was an unconventional person. (Bohemian) He would listen to Sabahattin's comments about the books with patience and help him understand the sections Sabahattin could not understand.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I started working to help Father. I hang a bag over my neck filled with goods, and visited Greek neighborhoods shouting, "Makaradis kovarikos! Makaradis kovarikos!" I selected Greek neighborhoods to sell goods, because I would be very embarrassed if any of our Turkish neighbors, who thought of us as a well off family, saw me sell goods on the streets.

In fact, I did not want them to have pity on us.

I would come back home from my work late at night exhausted. My father would take off my bag, and give me a kiss. Then he would count the money I earned. He would give me another kiss if the count was high. He would give me a kiss even if I had not sold a single item. For he knew how much I struggled to sell, when I could not sell anything, he would be deeply saddened on my behalf, but he would always try to hide his tears from me. After a while father opened a store in Edremit, but still he was going from one village to another like a peddler to sell more because even with his own store he was having hard time bringing home enough money. He would want me to write one day... write about all those people I met. In fact, my first writings consist of my observations of people during those days.

SEVGİ SANLI: I am Sevgi Sanlı... I am one of those who is honored to be Sabahattin Ali's correspondent.

He would address me as his confidant. In one of his first letters, he had told me that he had taken his first writing lessons from his father. Well., I think it would make more sense if I told you how I met Sabahattin Ali, and how we started writing to each other first.

I met Sabahattin Ali during my first adolescence years in Izmir. I was a student at Göztepe American Girls College. My father owned the Halkın Sesi (Voice of Public) newspaper. Our home was always full of writers, artists and journalists. I met very famous and important people like Suat Derviş, Halikarnas Balıkcısı at my father's house. At that time, Sabahattin Ali was teaching diction classes at Ankara State Conservatory. He was a well known writer. We had heard of his name but, had never read his works. Among my father's visitors was a young man, Aziz Bey, who was very interested in literature. On one of his visits, he told us that he knew Sabahattin Ali well, and that in fact he was a friend of Sabahattin Ali. When Aziz Bey saw my interest in literature, he wrote Sabahattin Ali a letter asking him to send his autographed books to me. That is how I started receiving books from Sabahattin Ali one after

another...I and mother and father read his books in no time...We were mesmerized by his works. So, I wrote him a letter stating my admiration and thanks to him. He replied shortly after. In this first letter written with green ink, his opinions about writers affected me deeply.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: *(as if reading from his letters)*

Don't overestimate the writers you like. An artist is like a hand filled with gold. If you take away the gold, remains are sand and pebbles...Don't deify writers in your minds. They are also people just like you.

SEVGİ SANLI: He liked Sophocles as a play writer. Of his works Sabahattin Ali especially liked King Oedipus and Antigone. He would often say "In these plays the way people are depicted, dramatic progress, and the beauty of the language is inexplicable". He thought of these plays as quite contemporary. As our correspondence progressed our families got to know each other also. Whenever Sabahattin Ali, his wife Aliye, and little daughter Filiz came to Izmir they would visit us. We were thrilled to have them as our guests.

Our meetings and correspondence continued in Ankara and in Istanbul. He would mention about many different subjects. In one of his letters, he had mentioned about how he started writing stories. When his retired father was working as a peddler to make a living, he would take little Sabahattin with him from one bazaar to another...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: *(keeps on reading...)*

Ladies would buy silk thread from my basket and stroke my head at the bazaar. Father always wanted me to write about what I saw at the bazaar. One day, I was given an assignment from school to write an essay about how my Sunday was. I had started my essay like this: "I woke up to my father's sweet voice early in the morning..." Father got mad up on reading this and yelled: "Get out of here, you liar son of a gun! I can hardly wake you up early in the morning... 'My father's sweet voice'...How can my voice sound sweet to you? If you want to be a writer, you should write the way you feel, but you should only write the truth!"

After graduating from elementary school, I attended Balıkesir Teacher Training School. My best friend there was Naci. I produced most of my first works during these years. I was sending my works to be published, however no publishers attempted to publish them in their newspapers or magazines. Yet, such a great happiness it is to see your works published in newspapers or magazines. I had no other choice than solving my problem on my own: I and my friends started to publish a newspaper at school. This wall newspaper was the first place where my poems and writings first appeared. As I was evaluating my writings, I was building confidence. With all this excitement, I started keeping a journal also. Henceforth, I was reading novels, going to movies and when available in the town watching plays with Naci.

NACİ: During the last two years at Edremit Elementary School I and Sabahattin were classmates. Both of our fathers were army officers. After graduating from elementary school in 1921, we applied for free boarding school of military. However, we were informed that by the order of the Caliph, that year the military schools were not accepting new students. We were deeply sorry for the news... One year later we applied to Balıkesir Teacher Training School and registered at the school. Sabahattin's number was 26, and my number was 27. We were sitting next to each other. Sabahattin was a manly, trustworthy, smart and honorable friend. He was not a hardworking student. However, he would always get the highest grades from exams.

He loved reading novels. During study hours, he would pull himself to the back of the room snacking on dried pumpkin seed; he would read Les Misérables, Pardaillans, and Around the World in 80 Days in a blink of time.

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He started writing seriously in his second year at school. His first work was a short story named Horoz Mehmet. Our literature teacher Mr. Gazali Bey liked the story very much he spoke very highly about Sabahattin in front of the whole class. This encouraging talk gave Sabahattin courage. He started writing poems. He loved the school...

But, everything changed one day. There was a performance at Girls Teacher Training School and we were not allowed to attend to this performance. However, Sabahattin suggested that we all went and watched the play no matter what. Nobody wanted to break the rules but Sabahattin. He pulled a cover over his head and went to the play. Unfortunately he was reported to the principal by another student, Abdülkadir, who was the most hardworking student of our class but never got the same attention from the literature teacher for his writings. The principal literally waited for Sabahattin's return and before Sabahattin explained anything with a roaring voice: "Don't spend your money, I am sending you back to your father!" the principal yelled at Sabahattin. Sabahattin was sent to the disciplinary board. He was scared...He was scared of being expelled from school. He came to me with an envelope in his hand one night.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Keep this envelope. You shall open it later.

NACİ:...He said and walked away. I noticed the rope he had wrapped around himself. Why should I open the envelope later? I got suspicious. I found a quiet corner and opened the envelope. It was a poem!

SABAHATTİN ALİ

My dear friend Naci,
They are going to expel me from the school.
What would you do
if they expelled you?

Here, I have decided,
I am going to die tonight.
Don't be sad,
For I will be in the skies...

NACİ: Oh my God! Sabahattin is going to commit suicide! He is going to hang himself with that rope! What should I do? I ran to the teacher on duty and told him the whole story. He was panicked. First we ran to the dormitory.. He was not there. Then we took the stairs to the backyard... The teacher was running and asking any student he run in to: have you seen Sabahattin? With an army of students behind us we came to the backyard. What a sight met our eyes! Sabahattin had climbed up to a tree and he was trying to fix the rope to the large trunk of the tree. He was getting ready to hang himself! The teacher screamed with fear: Are you out of your mind? Nobody will expel you from the school. Let that rope go! Sabahattin released the rope without even paying attention to the teacher's last words. He acted as if he had anticipated such kind of a response from the school. He climbed down the tree as if nothing out of ordinary had happened... I still remember the gratitude filled smile he secretly gave me after all...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I had really thought that they would expel me from school. How could I face father? Just when I was about to graduate from school in a year, all my efforts would go to waste. I used my talent as a story writer and made them believe my story to avoid being expelled from the school. I succeeded...I wanted them to excuse me but I did not want to beg for an excuse; that would hurt my pride. Well, my story worked I got myself out of trouble!

NACİ: That is right. Sabahattin was only given a notice. However, Sabahattin lost interest in school after this event. His opponent Abdülkadir was constantly reporting him to the principal: “Sabahattin reads novels, writes empty poems, and never studies during study hours”

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Abdülkerim was really bothering me. As my stories and poems were becoming popular among our teachers and the students, he was getting more jealous. He went further than just reporting me to the principal. Where ever we came across each other, he would shoulder me and try to trip me down. In fact, on one occasion he had tripped me down so harshly that our teachers had hardly stopped my nose from bleeding. However, I never told on him. Because my father had instructed me on not telling on anyone. I would be just like him if I told on him right? Since he was a well built child I could never handle him by myself. His behaviors got worse. I wanted to continue my education in İstanbul anyway so I went to the deputy principal and managed to transfer myself to İstanbul Teacher Training School. The school in Istanbul was in Cağaloğlu district. Our literature teacher was Ali Canip Yöntem... He would often sit by the pool to rest. I would use this opportunity to talk to him to learn from his experiences. Knowing my desire to become a writer, at one of those talks he gave me some advice: Look Sabahattin you are a smart kid. You can understand everything at once, so I won't keep it long. First of all, a candidate for a writer should read a lot. Even after you become a writer you should continue reading. Otherwise you might become a writer but not literate! Just like many today, who regard themselves as writers..

During these times father had found a job and moved the rest of the family to Ayvalık. They were doing okay. They lived in a big house. Fikret had started elementary school...Süheyla was growing up...But, mom was the same old mom fighting father all the time, and making everyone's life like hell. Whenever I went home on school breaks, I saw my dad suffer from mother. I was sorry for my dad. If it was not for my father I would never go home to visit. I could not take my mother's actions. On one of my breaks, father had spent a lot of money and rented a boat. I and Fikret were dressed up. We had even polished our shoes. Mother had parted Süheyla's hair in the middle and braided nicely. Süheyla was so pretty in her all white dress. Mother looked nice as always. We all boarded on to the boat with a great joy. Father was taking pictures continuously. Even other families on their boats were looking at us with envy. We were not much in to the sea yet when mother grabbed the pitcher and started yelling at Father: “How could you think this water would be enough for everyone? When are you going to do anything right? Why should I have to organize everything?” Father was begging her to stop screaming. She kept on screaming even after father told her there was more water somewhere on the boat. Well at this point I could not just watch mother scream at poor father and I yelled at her “Cut the bullshit! What do you want from my father?” Well of course my remarks made the situation even worse. She was not late for trying to jump in to the sea and screaming with a squeaky voice “Let go off me! I want to die... Father was so embarrassed, but he was still trying to stop mother from jumping in to the water. We the kids were holding on to mothers legs and clothing to stop out boat from sinking. Finally we got back home but in what condition: all torn up ! Fikret wasn't even able to stammer anymore. Eventually, mother was hospitalized in the French Hospital in İstanbul. She stayed there for six months. Father was paying six lira to the hospital per day. It was expensive and after six

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

months he could not afford it anymore. So we had to take mother back home although she was not fully recovered. Later on with the help of a friend we were able to put her in Zeynep Kamil Hospital for free. In the mean time, Father had to withdraw Fikret from school for financial reasons and he was also trying to take care of Süheyla. He could not bear all this on his shoulders anymore and finally he got ill towards the end of fall....And he died... He could not even see that mother was doing better... He left us just like that!

Mother was crying with guilt “ I know I made your father suffer but believe me it was all out of my hands, I could not control myself” Losing my father was so unbearable for me. Such a pain to lose your father!... I guess those who have lost their fathers will understand what I mean right?

My dear God!
Today,
is the darkest day of my poor life.

Today, I learned the dark news:
The death of my father
I am dumfounded with sorrow.
The joy of life is gone.
The news took away the smile from my lips.

It feels as if my heart is being carved.
Lord! How painful the death is.

The hands that stroked my face,
Just few days ago,
Are turning in to dirt now.

Those that were close to me just like my own body,
Are drifting away now.

Oh Father!...
Just up until yesterday
I was able to rest my head on your chest.

Believe me Father,
This fire has dried my tears.

ALİ ERTEKİN: We fled to Turkey in 1924. First we settled in Kars, and after a year we moved to İstanbul. I registered to Military school in Zeytinburnu, and stayed there for a year. After a year I transferred to a school in Cebeci, Ankara. I could not adjust to the climate in Ankara. There was a fellow named Halil İbrahim He asked me one day: “what happened to you Ali Efendi, are you ill? You are losing weight” “ I am ill” I said. “I have lost my appetite, I haven’t been adapted to the climate here” So I was sent to a hospital. Here I had to eat the standard boring food all the time: Bulgur pilaf, bulgur soup, and bulgur whatever... I was broke so could not eat out. Those were difficult times...

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SABAHATTİN ALİ: I graduated from Teaching School in 1927. I was appointed to an elementary school in Central Anatolia. Those days I was exchanging letters with literature teacher Nahit. Nahit was a beautiful girl.

NAHİT: I and Sabahattin met each other at a training course. His writing skills had attracted my attention. We started writing to each other after he was appointed to his first job as a teacher. In one of his letters that had started with “Dear Nahit” he was telling me about the places he was living.” This place is going to drive me crazy! There is nothing here. Imagine a place where there is no single person to have a real talk ... Everyone is so ordinary and banal. The whole city is surrounded by steppes. All mountains are as bare as they can be! But right ahead there is a pine forest... Even that forest does not blend well with the rest of the land here. Believe me it looks like a green velvet-patch on a dirty smock of a grocery store clerk! Mountains.... They have no trees or even a big rock on them. All are covered with pebbles not even soil!

I have been taking strolling in and around the city in hopes of finding a person to chat. It is impossible to find an intellectual person here. I am very lonely. Feeling so lonely in this big crowd is painful. I miss everything about Istanbul; the homes, the people and the Bosphorus...”

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Of course there was love in this longing. *(to Nahit)* I love you so much.

NAHİT: I love you too Sabahattin, but just as a friend! Please let’s not take this relationship to different points.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Everybody needs someone to share their pain and thoughts Nahit, and I can’t thing of a better person than you who could understand me. I love you like a real friend too. I wish I had a sibling like you... I was saying these but, still writing poems for Nahit...

I devoted myself to a hopeless love,
Never, I was given any affection or compliment.
While kneeling down to announce my love,
I felt a slap at my face in her eyes.

This is a single sided love dear God!
While despair is invading by brain,
I still love her... My God!
I have not seen a love affair like this...

When I came to Istanbul for Summer vocation I learned that Ministry of Education was sending teachers to Europe for education. I needed to take an exam for it. I took the exam and passed. I was going to stay in Germany for four years. After staying in Berlin for a while I moved to Potsdam. I had settled in a board house... I had to learn German as quickly as possible. I started taking lessons from an ex- sergeant who spoke some Turkish. I was also attending a language institute. Germany was not quite stable those days. Left wing was strong but unemployment, hopelessness and chaos, was nurturing Hitler. He was gaining power slowly. German nationalism was on the rise. Young German sergeants were the main supporters of this nationalistic rise. In fact, German capitalism was trying to cope with chaos, and establish its own dictatorship. There was an increasing anti-Semitism, and animosity towards all foreigners.

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NİHAL ATSIZ: I am Nihal Atsız... Sabahattin Ali was my friend then. Although he was reading Turgenyef, Gorky, Gogol, Puskin and likes of Russian writer's works he was also very patriotic. We had a great friendship. He had told me how he got expelled from his school in Germany: One day one of his German classmates makes a comment to Sabahattin "We should kick all parasite Turks from our county!" Sabahattin jumps from his chair and: "our government pays your government money for us to be here, we are not parasites, take your words back!" Of course the German student does not take his words back and Sabahattin slams him on the face very hard... Unfortunately this event becomes the news and German School declares that they don't want a student like Sabahattin. So, Sabahattin gets sent back to Turkey. Who could imagine that such a patriot would have ideas of trading and betraying his country!

(*The man in mask starts following Sabahattin Ali with his eyes...*)

ZEKERİYA SERTEL: At the time Sabahattin returned from Germany we were publishing Resimli Ay. He came to my office and asked :” Are you Zekeriya Sertel?”, “Yes” I said. He was a short, blond, cute young man. We all loved him in such a short time. It was impossible not to love someone like him; so smart, full of life, a personality that did not recognize restrictive boundaries. He liked reading Goethe and Thomas Mann a lot. He would always take their books with him where ever he went. In the mean time Nazim Hikmet was also working at Resimli Ay. Nazim also thought Sabahattin was a promising treasure!

NAZİM HİKMET: I was working at Resimli Ay as an editor and technical secretary. Resimli Ay had attracted many intellectual and patriotic elites. It had opened a war against cultural and religious organizations such as “Bible Society” and “Young Christians Association” which were in fact believed to be the voice of American imperialism. On the other hand, Soviet Union was being introduced to public by Resimli Ay. One day a small built young man with glasses appeared at the main office of Resimli Ay.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: My name is Sabahattin Ali.

NAZİM HİKMET: And I am Nazım Hikmet.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I know your name as well as your poems. I admire you... I know German. I write short stories. In fact I brought one with me. I would be honored if you could read and give me your opinion.

NAZİM HİKMET: I will red it right away. Glad to meet you.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: So am I.

NAZİM HİKMET: Said the young man, and left. I read his story right away. The story was about episodes from workers of Forestry. Although the effect of German romantizm was obvious in the story, it was a new step in Turkish writing as far as the content was concerned. You could notice that he was a talented writer from his first sentences. By bringing his story to Resimli Ay to be published, Sabahattin Ali was aware that he would be part of the war against imperialism. During our times together Sabahattin memorized Tolstoy, Cehov, Gorky and Şolohov. His relationship with me and with people around Resimli Ay helped him realize the socialist ideas. Isn't that so Mrs. Sabiha?

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SABIHA SERTEL: Sabahattin had learned about socialist literature in Germany and was already leaning towards socialist ideas when he returned to Turkey. You could see the clues of this from the stories he brought to us, or actually to you. However the idea of socialism had not completely formed in his mind. You pulled him not only in to realism, but also in to socialist ideas. In fact you were also the one who encouraged him to write novels. (*The man in mask makes a phone call. Nothing can be understood from his talk on the phone*)

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I had started working at Aydın Boys Art School as a teacher after returning back from Germany. Just when I had come to Istanbul for Summer vacation I was arrested by secret service and brought back to Aydın. According to allegations a newspaper named “Red İstanbul” was found in students lockers. I was placed in prison with Baha Bey, İzzet, Musa and Ali Cevat who had been arrested earlier. We had been reported allegedly for damaging propaganda by a student that I did not even know. All of the arrested were brought to Istanbul. However we were transferred back to Aydın because the alleged crime was committed in Aydın. Of course after the trial we were released! I utilized those three months spent in prison. I observed inmates there, and I learned that prison is one of the greatest resources for a writer. I established relationship with people of Anatolia, and with ordinary folks. I met the heroes of my famous stories such as Kuyucaklı Yusuf in the prison... After being released from prison I was appointed to Konya Karma Middle school to teach German...

MEHMET BAHA: I am Mehmet Baha, Sabahattin Ali’s student from Konya Karma Middle School... He was our school teacher but all students in Konya admired him. Although he was our German teacher he was helping us with our other courses also. He was ready to answer everyone’s questions any where, any time possible. He was dearly loved and respected by folks of Konya. He also had a great relationship with his fellow teachers...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I wrote Kuyucaklı Yusuf in Konya... There was a local newspaper named Yeni Anadolu in Konya and I was acquainted with the owner Cemal Kutay. He invited me to his office one day...

CEMAL KUTAY: We would like to publish your last work in our newspaper, what would you say Mr. Sabahattin? We will pay you the copyright... We will pay you weekly.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: OK. I said. We shook hands and I left.
(*The man in mask starts following Sabahattin Ali again...*)

Fifteen chapters of the novel were published in Yeni Anadolu. People showed great interest in the novel which also increased the sales of the newspaper. However, I was not getting paid as agreed. I was irritated by this. I went to Cemal Kutay and reminded him our agreement. “Do you remember you were going to publish my story and...”

CEMAL KUTAY: (*cutting Sabahattin Ali’s words*) Aren’t we publishing?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: We don’t have a problem there the problem is the payments... You were going to pay me weekly. It has already been two weeks, and you have not paid me a penny so far!

CEMAL KUTAY: (arrogant) We will pay... But we are a little bit tight these days. Be a little bit patient!

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SABAHATTİN ALİ: Why should I be patient? Your sales have gone up. The amount you will pay me is so little. Please respect my rights, and make my payment as soon as possible.

CEMAL KUTAY: Am I going to learn respect from you?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Of course you will! Pay me for copyrights immediately!

CEMAL KUTAY: What if I won't pay?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I won't let you publish my novel!

CEMAL KUTAY: Then stop it if you can! If you try any such thing you will pay a big price for it!

SABAHATTİN ALİ: He was threatening me by saying this. I left his office angry. I sent him an official notice from the notary public. They had to stop publishing my novel. Right in the wake of this I received a notice from the court. Allegedly, I had cited a poem before public seven months ago in which I satirized our President Atatürk.

Hear me those who can not separate from motherland!
Have the dirty creeks cleared up?
Has the blood stopped shedding?
Have the big goals being achieved?

Do they still hang those who believe in people?
Do they appoint the clowns as senators?
Does each villager have a plow now?
Have all the bony oxen come to life?

(The man in mask places phone calls)

The trial court was packed with students and other audiences. My lawyer had come from Istanbul... I said this in summary: "Your Honor, the poem in question was inspired from a Bektasi protest that took place in Sivas. It was written in Germany. Some parts of the poem have been changed by these delators. The name of Atatürk is never mentioned in the poem. The fact is that Mr. Kutay published my novel in his newspaper and made no payments to me. Hence, I stopped the publication. He is trying taking revenge now along with his fellow friend teacher Mustafa by trying to bring me down. These witnesses, Remzi and Emin Soysal are his relatives Your Honor. After all, how can I or anyone dare to satirize Atatürk? We all owe and respect him". Up on my talk, my students gave me support with their applause...My lawyer did not even see a need to talk on my behalf anymore because everything seemed to be in my favor...

(The man in mask phones someone in anger)

However, I was sentenced to a year in prison for insulting the President indirectly. All my students were in tears. They knew how I felt about Mustafa Kemal. I talked highly about him in my classes. So I was arrested... First night in Konya Prison I was locked to guard's room. Then I was taken to "yüze gelen mahpuslar" ward. As I was walking among prisoners, some just sitting on cushions on the floor and chatting, some preparing beans, some reading Koran

in the oil lamp light, they briskly stood up and saluted me, showed their affection with kind words. I was well respected prisoner. I wanted to know these folks... These were my folks, my own people, from my soil, my source. I started observing them, their behaviors. I was listening to their stories with no boredom what so ever. I was discovering the way they thought, their own ideas... It was month and a half later... The guard showed up: “ Get ready Mr. Sabahattin you are leaving” First, I sent my book chest to the door. All inmates were watching my books with respect. They were talking about my release. I did not quite understand what was happening. I was brought to the door by gendarme. With my coat on my arm I was passing among the prisoners in the yard. Some poor prisoners were asking for money. I tried to give them as much as I could. I was pleased to make these prisoners happy while being released. However, when we arrived at the door I sensed that I was not being released. I and an officer boarded on a train. There in the train I noticed the transfer documents. I was being transferred to Sinop Prison. I was struck by this. I was so disappointed. So down! I imagined a single standing prison by the sea. A dungeon where I knew no one! I was brought to a ward called Karaka which was located on the second floor of third division. This is where I met Hüseyin.

HÜSEYİN: All of the fifteen inmates in our ward were from Sinop... Most of them were in prison for shooting and murder. There were no bunk beds in wards then... We were sleeping in beds on the floor. Oil lamps were used for illumination. The prisoners were busy with handcrafts. We were carving souvenirs from walnut wood such as trays, backgammon boards, and cigarette boxes. Mustafa would sell these and give us twenty percent from the sales price. The rest of the money was his... The director of the prison Mr. Cevded, from İstanbul, was a kind man. He was said to have worked in Ottoman Palace during Abdülhamit’s ruling. One day Mr. Cevded appeared with a seemingly nice gentleman who had eye glasses on. He called Mustafa, “Mr. Sabahattin is under your custody now, and he will be staying in your ward”. Later we learned that he was Sabahattin Ali. He was a friendly person we all mingled quickly. He was single when he came to prison. He did not have visitors quite often either. Only there was a teacher coming to visit him from Sinop: Teacher Fatma from Bolu! They used to meet in directors office.

Sabahattin Ali received books and magazines via mail. The money he had was hardly enough for food. Since we almost all inmates in our ward were from the same town we all liked the same kind of food. I was the designated cook for the ward. I would keep the bills and split it at the end of the month. In our ward no one had clue about poetry or story. While we drank and played cards, Sabahttin would lay in his bed, and read books in the poor light of the oil lamp until late nights. He had lots of books, many in German. During the day he would utilize chests as table and write on them. He would not talk to us if we did not ask him something. One day he had mentioned about the corrupt government officials; about how we could not make any progress unless this corruption was stopped...

(The man in mask places a phone call)

Mustafa would say “This government has spent money on you, educated you. Isn’t it unfair for you to talk about government in this manner? Mr. Sabahattin: “ Here, you see how I live... And you Mr. Mustafa, what could be said about you? You drink in the ward, gamble, and use these inmates’ labor to make money...Yes, you are producing work here, but you are exploiting these poor inmates. Live me alone and mind your business Mr. Mustafa” Mustafa was speechless! He never said a word against Sabahattin again because he knew Sabahattin was right. Sabahattin did not give any political speeches again either. He only read... He would join our singing from time to time.

(along with bağlama all together...)

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

This era did not become my companion.
Each and everyday is another poison
I embraced the iron fences of the prison

I take short walks in the courtyard
Thinking at times, and
sitting now and then.
I daydream,
But the days are not passing
The days are not passing....

(poem by Sabahattin Ali)

HÜSEYİN: As the days passed, Brother Mustafa brought us new designs to improve our handcrafts quality. He was helping us improve ourselves.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: In this prison that was surrounded by strong walls and the sea, the water would splash against the walls, and the sound of this splash would reverberate in the stone rooms. This sound...This sound was inviting me for long journeys...The sea birds would emerge from behind the walls water dripping from their wings... As soon as they saw the iron fences of the prison they would fly away... You could do a prisoner a big favor if you locked him in a cell isolated from the rest of the world. The most devastating thing for a prisoner is to see the freedom so close however, impossible. What could be a better torture than listening to the waves of the see, the symbol of freedom, but not being able to see them?
(Sabahattin Ali starts singing, the rest of the prisoners join him slowly...)

Do not bow your head,
Let it go my poor soul, let it go
Don't let your cries be noticed,
Let it go my poor soul, let it go

The up roaring wild waves of the sea,
brushing against the walls,
Those sounds that divert you
Let it go my poor soul, let it go

Even if I may not see the sea
Turn your face up to the sky
For the sky is just like the sea
Let it go my poor soul, let it go

The bullets will end by shooting
The roads will end by walking
The imprisonment will end by serving
Let it go my poor soul, let it go

When you are most depressed,
Send a complaint to the God

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

The beautiful days are still ahead
Let it go my poor soul, let it go

ALİ ERTEKİN: I graduated on the tenth anniversary of the Turkish Republic. We were waiting for orders to be appointed. I was sent to Kırklareli. I went to Kırklareli while other few friends stayed in Babaeski. I was a cavalry in the army. Naturally we also had infantries and artilleryman among us. I was assigned to second cavalry troops. I completed my initial training in Kırklareli in 1943. The place known as Şişli Mosque today was our school then. Our commander was a young graduate Faik. His last name was Türün... Today we know him as Faik Türün Pasha! He has a strong support so he stayed in İstanbul I was always speaking the truth. Hence, the lieutenants there did not like me, so I was sent o Kırklareli.

(10th year anthem)

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I was listening to the news on the radio. Speaker was announcing the long waited news. I turned to fellow inmates: “Friends, congratulations! Amnesty has been declared” To my surprise everyone was stunned! They stopped doing what they were busy with at the moment. Hüseyin was peeling potatoes and he remained motionless with his knife in his hand. Just like the game we played in our childhood? No talk, no move! We were longing for such news. All we talked about day and night was the dream of such news. After a while the scene began to change. They started mumbling and moving. Then suddenly they started screaming as if they were being tortured. First Hüseyin dropped the knife from his hand. He immediately ran and placed a gramophone record on the player.

(A dance melody is heard. This lively music had almost dominated the Tenth Year Anthem. First Hüseyin, and then the rest of the actors, except Sabahattin Ali and Ali Ertekin, start dancing. Hüseyin moves towards Sabahattin Ali dancing, takes his hands to invite him to dance. Sabahattin Ali does not resist longer. Although he can't dance as well as others, he tries genuinely. They all dance for a while than the music stops suddenly. Everyone sits. The Tenth Year Anthem still continues to play slightly on the background).

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I would be in jail two more years if it was not for amnesty. As I was saying farewell to inmates, they had no idea I was molding the new heroes of my novels to come on my mind. Right after getting out of prison, I went to Istanbul then to Ankara immediately. I wanted to find I job as soon as possible. I applied to the Ministry of education for a position. They kept me waiting for seven months. I was rejected due to my ideology. I was being asked to prove that I had changed my ideas. I tried to explain to them that it was all fabricated that I was innocent to begin with. I requested from the State Council to review my situation so I could work and be useful again. In the mean time I had one of my poems, my love, published in Varlık Magazine.

It is you that beats in my chest, not my heart,
It is you that stands upright in my mind as my ideal,
It is you who fill my days of quarter of a century,

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If I take you out, my life will seize before it starts.

What difference it will make if I put all these in a verse?

I gave my heart to Atatürk
My heart is filled with love,
only for Him.

I made an appointment with Ministry of Education right away. The decision of the State Council on one hand and this poem on the other I went for my appointment.
Why are you not assigning me for a teaching job?

MINISTER: We are not bound by law to make use of you.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: But I have a scholarship that I have to pay back by working for the state.

MINISTER: I release you from your debt to us.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: (*with a loud voice*) I do not owe you sir, I owe to my state! You are not authorized to erase my debt to my state!

MINISTER (*remaining calm*). There is nothing our ministry can do for you.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Why?

MINISTER: Look son! What you have done is directly related to Mustafa Kemal. You have written a poem against Him. We can not employ you.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: The Minister was trying to get rid of me. “If it is so, I will go to Mustafa Kemal, and tell him in person. I will inform him that you are not assigning me for a position!” I told the Minister. Just when I had turned away to the door, the Minister came running to me in fear.

MINISTER: Wait a minute please! I will try to do something. Just come back a week later...

HASAN İZZETTİN DİNAMO: Before the poem in question gets in to hands of Mustafa Kemal, his former secretary mentions to him at a dinner table: “That poet who wrote a poem against you...Sabahattin Ali... He has been released from the prison, and wants to go back to teaching” Mustafa Kemal: “ Is there any legal objection for his assignment as a teacher again?” “No Mr. Commander”. Mustafa Kemal with a firm tone “ So why are you asking me?” “The crime has been committed against you Commander.” “I am offended! So you think I regard my personal feelings over law? Am I that selfish? Appoint him to the first opening possible.”

SABAHATTİN ALİ: First I was appointed as Chief of Publishers then to the Ministry of National Education as the examinig official.

I started my work immediately. I was staying with my friend Emin since I was out of prison. I needed to get my own place. I had started thinking about marriage seriously. However there are many questions in my mind. Isn't it easier to be a single writer in this country? What if I get arrested after I get married? Why should I make a woman suffer with me? What if I have to censor my work to protect my family, won't it devaluate my qualifications as a writer? On

the other hand I thought marriage was necessary too. I needed to get married to have a comfortable home to write, but with whom should I marry? I can't marry my love Nahit because she is married to another man now. Nevertheless, she never returned my love. Should I marry someone traditional who can adjust to my life or should I marry someone who is free spirited? Of course it should be the first one. Ayşe, my friend and history teacher, is a good candidate. She understands and likes literature. I should write and propose to her. The answer was prompt.

AYŞE: Crazy Sabahattin! Now I understand you will never behave! You just got out of prison... You went through so much trouble and still in trouble. You just got a job to enjoy your life and you are trying to get yourself in to a big trouble again? I take your proposal as a joke now. If you really thought of such a proposal seriously, you are acting childish. That is right, now that there is nothing else left for you to do you thought of marriage... You thought about few names to propose and I was one of them. No, Sabahattin don't try to pull me in to trouble or I will cut off your Greek nose!

I don't think seriously about this sort of a marriage, especially with you! It would make me burst in laugh. What is wrong with you Sabahattin? Are you bored of my friendship? If so just let me know and I won't bother you any more. I value our friendship so much and I don't want to sacrifice it for anything. If you really want to marry it can not be I. However, we can together look for a good candidate for you. I am sure as you read these sentences the woman you wanted to marry died in your mind already but again I feel so close to you that I can not marry you to ruin this. You should marry someone who is calm and ordinary who can be a homemaker because I believe you can only be happy with such kind of a girl. Remember you had indicated this in one of your letters to one of our mutual friend?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: The girl that I will marry should be quiet and like an angel. She should be in and out of my study room like an image...She should make my writing easy. She should not object to my reading. She should not disturb me... In short, she should dedicate herself to me. She should exist only for me.

AYŞE: That is right! You are smart and you should have such smart ideas about marriage too. God forbid, think about what can happen if we marry each other. We will turn our lives and our home in to hell. Not only we will suffer, but also our neighbors from our yelling and quarrels. Lets end this talk about marriage Sabahattin. Let our beautiful friendship last forever.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: You are right Ayşe...You are very right! So who should I marry? *(suddenly)* Oh yes I found her! Aliye! Why didn't I think about her earlier? Aliye! Yes, yes! Aliye...

ALİYE: Those days we lived in İstanbul and we were neighbors with Salih Bey, the head pharmacist of Gülhane Hospital. We often socialized with his family. On one occasion he suggested that we go to Suadiye Beach. Those days Suadiye's water was crystal clear. The next day we all got together and went to Suadiye Beach. That is where I met Sabahattin the first time. He was a relative of Mr. Salih. I met him that is all. Nothing happened between us. Few days later we went to a traditional circumcision ceremony together. We stayed at the ceremony for few hours. When we were about to return we noticed Sabahattin was not there. He was sitting under a three reading a book with the lamp we used at night to get there...When Mr. Salih said: "Let's go" he got up and held the light to my face and stared in to my eyes...But I wasn't even least interested in Sabahattin because I was interested in Lieutenant

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

Muhittin, Mr. Salih's brother in law. Though I was not in love with Lieutenant Muhittin for he was quite older than I. I never saw Sabahattin afterwards, because Mr. Salih had retired and his family had moved to Ankara...

Two years later Mr. Salih's wife sent my mother a letter : “ Sabahattin wants to marry Aliye. Everything will be taken care of by us. All gifts are from us. We are waiting for an answer from you.

(the man in mask phones someone)

My father was against of this marriage proposal. He told my mother that he thought Sabahattin had trouble with the state and this would make me suffer in the future. I would learn this later... However, I wanted to marry Sabahattin. Despite of my father's resistance I wanted Sabahattin. I was going to live in Ankara! Father had to accept it. Mother sent them a letter stating our acceptance of the proposal. Due to harsh winter season the engagement was done through mail... The presents were sent to us from Ankara. I had my colored picture taken to send to Sabahattin. He wrote me a letter up on receipt of my picture. He was expressing his feelings about how beautiful my picture was. He started sending his books along with his second letter...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: If you are an artist, the best way to impress a woman is to present her your works. There is no doubt that if you are a good writer or a musician or a painter you will have less trouble impressing a women. I think there is hardly any woman in the world that could refuse a beautiful voice or a beautifully written piece of work. As a matter of fact being an artist is a valuable advantage. Here is what an old saying says: “If you let your daughter choose she will either marry a drummer or a wind-blower”!

ALİYE: I fell madly in love with Sabahattin after I read his books. He was presenting different worlds to me. My dreams of living in Ankara had transformed in to living with Sabahattin in Ankara.

He came to Istanbul in May and stayed at our home for a night. Next day we went to Kadıköy matrimonial agency, signed out marriage documents and together went right back to Ankara by train. We stayed at Mr. Salih for a week. I had a gorgeous wedding dress made by an Armenian tailor. Within a week we had our wedding ceremony, and we moved in to our own apartment which was a cute penthouse. Sabahattin had a second job as a German teacher at a middle school so we had no financial problems. He would pull himself to his study room to read and write...I would quietly bring his coffee or tea to his room and leave the room in the same manner. His novel Kuyucaklı Yusuf got published in Tan. We are both very happy!

SABAHATTİN ALİ: In the beginning of 1937 I was called up to military service. We moved to Istanbul because the military school was in Harbiye, İstanbul. I met Niyazi Ağırnaslı there.

NIYAZI AĞIRNASLI: As Sabahattin said I met him face to face at military school. We were together in the same detachment.

ALİYE: I was pregnant at that time. Our daughter, Filiz, was born when Sabahattin was on his army duty...

(the man in mask places a phone call while observing Sabahattin Ali)

ALİYE: While I was still in the hospital Sabahattin came to visit. He looked worried. He was mingling with Filiz, but certainly his mind was else where. You look worried Sabahattin?

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SABAHATTİN ALİ: They want to promote me down as a sergeant. I won't get paid if that happens.

ALİYE: How can we make a living?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: The minister is Saffet Arıkan. He likes and supports me. I must go to Ankara...

ALİYE: So he said and left. He was back from Ankara in a day. He seemed happy. He had met the Minister and Afet İnan. He was pleased from İnan's attention. In fact he was sent to Eskişehir as a lieutenant. We stayed there for six months then returned to Ankara. This time he was assigned as a teacher to School of Music for Teachers. We rented a penthouse again. This time on Karanfil street. Pertev Naili Boratav, Yaşar Nabi and his wife, Cevdet Kudret and his wife were our very close friends. Almost every night we spent together. When we were not with friends Sabahattin was writing. Sometimes he would even write as I was listening to the radio in the room or while friends were over at our house. His works were getting published in daily newspapers and later as books. However, he was suddenly called up to army duty again...

NİYAZİ AĞIRNASLI: We were called up to army duty up on the start of World War II... I and Sabahattin were sent to Sarıkamış. We were assigned as auxiliary officers. I was the head of the unit. With about six hundred man on duty we were the mobile bakery for the eighth division. We were discharged again. Then called up again... This time the fascism was about to take control of whole Europe. Stalingrad was besieged by Germans...Had Stalingrad fallen, the Germans would invade Moscow and the Red Army would lose its power. This whole scenario was being promoted by imperialist powers of course. These powers were leaving Moscow alone with fascist Italians and Germans. We were on duty in Hadımköy at the time. We were on our horses listening to the news. The speaker was talking about the possible fall of Stalingrad. I and Sabahattin were terrified. We could not even imagine what would happen to people of the world. The speaker was continuing " millions of Russians were killed by German invaders." I burst in crying. So did Sabahattin. Some sixty million people would die by the end of the war...

NİHAL ATSIZ: Can you see how he is crying?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: And you are enjoying!

NİHAL ATSIZ: You are a partisan of Russia. As if your real brothers are dying...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: People are dying, people! And you are about to dance out of joy!

NİHAL ATSIZ: Yes I will dance...Won't your heaven Russia dissolve if Stalingrad falls?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: And how would this benefit you?

NİHAL ATSIZ: Then the Germans will grant us the Turkic Republics that are under control of Russia...

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I think you are forgetting that these fascist Germans first killed the Jews, then the foreigners, then the non-Nazi Germans... And now they are after other nations. Also don't forget that they regard Turks as the lowest of all people.

NİHAL ATSIZ: If we take our place with them and support them everything will be different.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I can't believe this, you are so childish Nihal! How can you believe such ridiculous ideas. I believe that Germans will lose but even if they win, do you think they will give you the Turkic republics?

NİHAL ATSIZ: Yes they will. Of course if we go to war on their side. If they don't give us the Middle Asia then we will seize by ourselves!

SABAHATTİN ALİ: You will seize! Didn't we sacrifice one hundred thousand soldiers on Allahuekber Mountain because of such empty dream? We have not even improved Anatolia yet. Let go of such empty dreams...

NİHAL ATSIZ: Some nations are superior to others and some people are superior to others. Trying to treat all people equal by force is more ridiculous and against nature.. You should get real, and let your ridiculous dream go.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Here lays the difference between our ideas Ms. Atsız. We do not categorize people by their color, eyes, ears, height or skull. We treat them all as humans. Our ideals are so opposite that we can not agree on anything with you. Fighting to stop the likes of you is our duty. We should stop you before you start to harm people. Had Hitler been stopped when he declared his plans, humanity would not have lived this tragedy...

MEHMET: I am Mehmet Sabahattin's cousin. Sabahattin was discharged one more time. I invited him to my wedding ceremony so he came to Edremit. He would hardly go out.
(the men in mask follows Sabahattin with his eyes)

One day he got up in the morning and went out for a walk. It was about noon time an officer appeared at our door and gave us the order to go to the police station with him. There stood Sabahattin... Apparently, while Sabahattin strolling through the city he was taking some notes. The security guard, Ali, found him suspicious and brought him to the police station. Those days were very critical days. Anybody suspicious could be a spy! Luckily the Mayor took the charge of Sabahattin and ordered him to be released.

ALİYE: Up on our return back to Ankara Sabahattin was appointed to Conservatory for he knew German very well. Those days many scholars, artists were escaping from Germany to Turkey, and the Conservatory was established by one of them, Carl Ebert. Although a little old, Ebert was a very handsome teacher. He was a very well known and respected conductor. He had two daughters. They were quite friendly folks. Mr. Ebert and Sabahattin got along very well. Ebert's would often invite us for dinner. They especially adored our daughter Filiz.

FİLİZ: There was a performance stage at the Conservatory. My father was working as a translator to Carl Ebert who did not know a word of Turkish. Although he was a translator, he was in charge of all plays and operas that were going to be put on the stage. He would watch the rehearsals, deal with the students and the stage setting. In short my father was in charge of everything related to stage. He was very busy. He would take me to work with him so I knew all about his work.

ALİYE: You look so happy Sabahattin.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: How can I not be happy Aliye? I am engaged in arts. We have great students, Muazzez İlgin, Meliha Ars, Mahir Canova...And also Cüneyt Gökçer. I think he will become a great actor. He suits to the stage perfectly, he is like a master of the acting. He will be a famous actor known by the world, you will see.

ALİYE: The first concerts would take place in the Conservatory hall. When Hasan Ali Yücel was the Minister of Education, I would see President İnönü in the teacher's room often. İnönü showed great affection to our daughter. The concert hall would get packed, but not even whispers could be heard. Everyone would listen to the concert conducted by the German Conductor in silence.

The first graduates of the Conservatory went on a tour to İzmir. They presented "Madame Butterfly" as their first performance. Mesude Çağlayan and Ayhan Aydan were the leading actors... "Bizim Şehir, Our City" and "Yanlışlıklar Komedyası, The Comedy of Misapprehensions" were presented as stage plays. I got a chance to watch Cüneyt Gökçer and other students there for the first time. Sabahattin was right. I admired Mr. Cüneyt... In fact I admired all other students too.

Our days were filled with happiness like this. However, it would not last long. Why? Wait I will tell you why: "The Devil Within Us", Sabahattin's novel, had been published when he started working at the Conservatory. He had targeted racists and Turanists. Naturally he drove the fascists crazy so he became their target. Nihal Atsız wait not long to publish a brochure titled "The DEVILS within us". Sabahattin was being harshly slandered in this brochure.

SEVGİ SANLI: Husband and wife had dedicated themselves to their daughter. Especially Sabahattin loved her so passionately. One day their house in Ankara got raided by police...Aliye was waiting helplessly. Filiz was watching police take his fathers books in a disgusted manner. She did not have any idea about what was happening. She was frozen!

SABAHATTİN ALİ: It was few days after this incidence. It was after midnight. Aliye and Filiz were already sound asleep. Suddenly I heard a noise in my daughter's room. *(He gets up, and listens to the noise. Filiz appears...She walks in to the living room with tiny steps half asleep. A bookcase appears suddenly. Filiz changes her direction to the bookcase. With her eyes half sleepy she touches the shelves as if to see if the books are still there or not.)*

CURTAIN

PART II

NİHAL ATSIZ:

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

I won't keep it long. I am writing to express my concerns about our Ministry of Education. Communists have infiltrated in to our Ministry of Education. These traitors have taken the advantage of the negligence of the Ministry and occupied important positions. Now, they are spreading their poisonous ideas. There is a member of the Language Institution and State

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

Conservatory. His name is Sabahattin Ali. This fellow is a known Communist. He was sentenced to jail for satirizing Atatürk, and criticizing the existing state order. This creature, now under the protection of Hasan Ali, is having a comfortable life with our taxpayer's money!

MEDIHA ESENEL: I am Mediha Esenel. I was an instructor at Ankara University those days.

To describe you the atmosphere of those days is hard. Whenever there was a whisper about "home search" by the police, of course without a warrant, everyone would try to collect all of the books banned by the state order and squirrel them away. Most popular of such books were of Nazım Hikmet's books who was in prison in Bursa those days. God forbid, if you got labeled once, then you would lose everything dear to you, your job, life, and your family. No one could mention the word "democracy".

Nihal Atsız in fact was targeting Hasan Ali Yücel, because Hasan Ali was sincerely trying to educate the public. Two major projects were in progress during his time: The translation of World Classical Literature Works and the establishment of Village Institutes. These institutes were education centers where the young and bright children from villages thrived. These institutes were like seeded fertile lands! These institutes spread all over Anatolia in no time. All of the volunteers and teachers had dedicated themselves to these institutes. They built these institutes from scratch. I would visit these institutes from time to time. During my visits I could see in the eyes of these bright forgotten village kids' eyes the hunger for learning, their talents and their beautiful minds. Girls and boys were so eager to learn. They put all their efforts to create themselves a new, better world. However the conservatives and the Fascists of this country, who were quite uncomfortable to see the awakening of the public, were lauder than ever: "Village Institutes are nests for Communists", "Village Institutes are institutes for prostitution", "Hasan Ali supports Communists, and he should be taken down from his position..."

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I filed a suite immediately...

VELİ DEMİRÖZ: I am a graduate of Çifteler Village Institute. Right wing movements had reached its peak especially after 1944. No day was passed uneventful in Ankara or İstanbul. That day I was going to the court in Ankara for my own trial. Front of the court building was packed with people who had heard about the case of Sabahattin Ali- Nihal Atsız that was going to take place on the same day...The crowd was so big that the streets were completely blocked. Mounted police were on duty waiting close to the court building.

CHOIR: The Hell with the Communists! The Hell with Sabahattin Ali! Long live Atsız!

VELİ DEMİRÖZ: I had nice place to watch the event from above. Not long after people started whispering "Sabahattin Ali is coming" There was an overwhelming silence that you could even hear the sound of a single fly in the sky. "The roads are packed, how is he going to walk through? What if someone attacks him?" I was thinking to myself. Suddenly Sabahattin Ali appeared. As he walked through the crowd along with a company the crowd spread in to two to make him a way...He looked very confident...He did not seem nervous at all. Together with his friends he walked in to the Court House.

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

SABAHATTİN ALİ: As we walked it I noticed most of the audiences were of Atsız. They did not notice that I was nervous. The Judge is about to take his place... Something is going to happen, but what?

CHOIR(suddenly) The Hell with the Communists! The Hell with Russian agents!
The Hell with Russian agents! The Hell with the Communists! The Hell with Russian agents!

JUDGE: If you keep screaming like this I will end the session. I will end the session!
(Choir starts singing the National Anthem... Naturally the Judge keeps silent too.)

CHOIR(from outside): The Hell with the Communists! Hell with Russian agents!
LAWYER(whispering in to Sabahattin Ali's ear) This is getting dangerous. I am glad we are on the first floor. Lest quietly sneak out through the window...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I am walking through the noisy crowd and quietly getting out of the window!

FİLİZ: Uncle Pertev had told me...My fathers escape was on the news that night. However that night there was a play. My father needed to go to this play due to his position in the Conservatory. Uncle Pertev and his wife came to pick up my dad to go together. As they were walking down the street someone threw a stone to them which landed right next to my father. Actually it slightly hits my father's shoulder... Here is what Uncle Pertev told me: “ Sabahattin tuned around and start running towards darkness. I had never seen anyone run so fast in my life. We were running after him. When we finally caught Sabahattin he had grabbed someone and beating him already. However, the offender managed to escape!

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I feel down...My friends are advising me not to go out alone. One day President İnönü came to one of the concerts. I was one of the greeters. A warm smile formed on his face when he saw me “ welcome Mr. President” I said. “How are you Sabahattin? He asked. “Not very well, I am being bothered” I said. He smiled again “ Don't worry everything will get better” Nevertheless the atmosphere of the second trial had changed dramatically. The lawyer of the other party had resigned. Atsız came to the trial alone looking miserable. Somebody had twisted the ears of folks around Atsız I guess! Of course Mr. President was on his Minister side. Although Atsız was wrong, I felt pity for him. Atsız was sentenced to prison for four months.

MEDİHA ESENEL: The racists were very mad at Sabahattin Ali...They were raged! Blackening of Sabahattin was continuing...Sabahattin was shown as target to the young fascists.

ALİYE: He had come home late one night. He was covered with dirt. He looked disturbed. He was trying to hide his face. “What is the matter Sabahattin” I asked. “I fell down” he said. “ I shall wash my face and hands before Filiz sees me” He went to the bathroom. Later I would learned that he was in fact attacked by students from the University who were supporters of Atsız.

MEDİHA ESENEL: Unfortunately Hasan Ali Yücel and his institutions, The Village Institutes, lost the battle against conservatives. President İnönü kept Hasan Ali as a Minister for a while but eventually could not resist conservatives and racists. He threw their heads to racists. The new Minister, I don't even remember the name, ruined the Village Institutes.

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SABAHATTİN ALİ: I know our time is going to come too. How can I make a living if I get fired? I should start looking for an alternative. Just as I was thinking I received a letter from Mr. Cami. He was asking us to publish something in Istanbul called “Homeland and World”. I had a job but, I needed to look in to other possibilities just in case. So I started writing for Homeland and World. Hence, I was traveling to Istanbul from time to time. Well, I was laid off from my job at the Conservatory in two weeks following the appearance of my work in Homeland and World.

MÜZEHHER VA-NU: I am Müzehher Va-Nu... The country was in a total den of intrigue. Each day someone was being arrested and sent to prison cell. There was a painter... Faris was his name. My husband Vala would tell me. “Müzehher, this painter Faris is one of the most beautiful folks on earth. He never thinks badly of anyone, he can share anything he owns with others. Only if everyone could be like him the world would be a place to live!” Faris was ill, but still he was taken by the police one night. And few days later his death was announced...It was such a bad period time in the country. All the intellectual scholars were being laid off from the universities... Some were suddenly disappearing from the face of earth! Simply vanishing! Were they being exiled to some unknown places? Vala was receiving letters related to these issues everyday. Some writers were brave enough take the risk to write: “Someone has been killed... Someone has been taken under custody”

MEDİHA ESENEL: The newly appointed Minister of Education, Reşat Şemsettin Sirer, started cleansing of all scholars known by their leftist ideas. Of course the Village Institutes took their share too, and now it was turn for Ankara University. It was our turn now: Pertev Naili Boratav, Niyazi Berkes, Behice Boran and us.

SABIHA SERTEL: The establishment of Democrat Party had given hopes to everyone. People from every section of the public showed their support to the party. This party meant democracy for everyone, because now there would be parties to chose from. Now, we were not bound to a single political view anymore. Democracy! Even the scholars believed that this new party would bring democracy to the society. Everyone thought that nothing could be worse than the existing administration. Hence, intellectuals, scholars, leftists most everyone were preparing to vote for the new Democrat Party.

ZEKERİYA SERTEL: I was publishing Tan Newspaper... After World War II ended with the victory of the democracy we were all encouraged. We believed that Turkey can transfer in to democracy easily. So we supported the new Democrat Party with all of our efforts. We had become part of United Nations which consisted of democratic nations. So we had to become a democracy. We had to refuse the dictatorship. İsmet İnönü also was aware of the need for a second political party for the sake of democracy. However, others did everything to stop us. We were not violating the law. Sabahattin Ali was one of the forerunners in this combat.

SABIHA SERTEL (the sound of a typewriter): Germany lost...But what good was it for us? We still had fascist at very critical positions in our country. Although someone would write: “We absolutely have no fascists in our country” in Akşam Newspaper. Sure you don’t need magic to say that. We don’t have fascists, because the name of fascism is democracy in our country. Democracy is such an international mask that once you wear it you can do whatever you want! Especially if you have a supporter like the governing party, no worry for you. You are safe!(*The men in mask orders someone on the phone*)

ZEKERİYA SERTEL: Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın was the first to respond to Sabiha with his writing “Rise all people of the homeland!, These people can not be shut by the government. It is the duty of the writers and free citizens of this country to shut them up!” We were

expecting something like this lately. We even knew the organizer of this movement: Alaattin Tiritoglu, the political inspector of the current administration. A day after, 15 thousand students, holding up flags and the picture of İnönü, started their action in the courtyard of the university.

NAIL ÇAKIRKAN: I am Nail Çakırhan...I was working at Tan. Mr.Zekeriya and Mrs. Sabiha had not come to work that day. The students arrived at the printing house without encountering any difficulty. One group entered inside. They started vandalizing everything inside the printing house, throwing everything out through the window. We owned the best rotative machine those days. No matter what they did, they could not stop the rotatives. Unfortunately an officer in civilian clothes gave them the advice: “Just throw lead type in to the rotatives’ life vessel and start it. That’s all!” So they did. Mission was accomplished! After this, the students directed themselves to the Russian Embassy. Someone in civilian clothes told them:” No, no. This is enough” Their mission was not to create tension between nations. They only wanted to silence the opposing press or may be to completely get rid of it. Apparently, they had planned a visit to Sabahattin Ali’s Yeni Dünya and other publishers. By the afternoon they completed their mission and dissolved.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I was jobless one more time... I should get used to this, but how can I? Who is going to take care of Aliye and Filiz? I need to do something. I can not find a job in press anymore. There is no one left to give us a job in press. I should talk to Aziz for he is also jobless...

RIFAT ILGAZ: The newspaper, Gerçek that I and Aziz worked at was also closed down by martial law. Gerçek was just a daily newspaper. It was closed because one of talks by Celal Bayar was published without any deductions. Those days Celal Bayar was an intellectual and a member of the Democrat Party. Whenever I and Aziz met we tried to come up with a solution to our case. We were thinking of publishing something, because we could not do anything else. What could we publish? The Socialist Party had been established at the time. Its headquarter was in Sıraselviler. Some working class party members were advising us to publish a humor magazine. One night Aziz and I were walking down on Unkapanı Bridge.

AZİZ NESİN: Look Rıfat...I gave a thought in to this idea and I think it is clever to publish a humor magazine. We shall name it Markopasha. With humor you can say what you want without irritating anyone. Humor softens the atmosphere as you know. We won’t get much reaction to our ideas then. In addition, our people love humor so we can actually make a living on this magazine.

RIFAT ILGAZ: However, everyone of us was broke! We could not even afford public transportation that we had to walk to everywhere in İstanbul. I did not want to be burden to my friends anymore so I was trying to get back to teaching at that time. Besides, I was sick. Our friends collected money and bought me a bus ticket to Ankara. I came across Sabahattin in Ankara and he introduced me to folks around him.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Rıfat Ilgaz is a promising writer.

RIFAT ILGAZ: Said Sabahattin. “Listen to me carefully Rıfat. I have talked to Aziz... Get ready. We are going to publish Markopasha soon. We appointed Haluk Yetiş as the director. So, this has become quite serious...”

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ALİYE: We had a house in Edremit that was inherited from his father. Sabahattin sold the house to be able to publish Markopasha.

HALUK YETİŞ: Haluk Yetiş...Those days the circulation of daily newspapers was about twenty thousand...But Markopasha's circulation had reached sixty thousand right after its publication. The owner was Sabahattin Ali. The editorial article of Markopasha was written by him.

MEDİHA ESENEL: Life is strange! Sabahattin was fired from his work, but he went to Istanbul to continue his fight with his pen. Through his writing he was disintegrating the administration. Just like Kuyucaklı Yusuf who had directed his gun to all evils...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: *(reading from his articles)* Yes, Representative of Turkish Republic to the United Nations has suggested that since Ürdün was an independent and free country she should be accepted into the United Nations Committee. However, we know as a fact that twenty five years ago, Mustafa Kemal did not approve of such independence as independence of Ürdün and decided to fight for a true independence for his own country. In our belief, any member of a foreign army be it a general, technician, or anyone dressed as a civilian, or anyone in their jeeps, can not permanently be on duty in a true independent country. It is said that foreign investment is coming to our land again. Through these investments the new roads will be built, the existing roads will be stretched; the airplanes will fly in the skies, we will have non-stop mine production, everyone will live in prosperity. Well, if we were to beg for foreign investment then why did we fight so hard to get rid of it for forty years? What was that struggle for? If we were to eventually beg for foreign investment, then why did we have all those celebrations when we kicked them out?

Our demand is that any decision made should not only benefit special interest groups. It should benefit the whole nation. We don't want the people of this land to be penalized for their ideas. We want them to only be evaluated by the good and bad they have done for this country. We don't want the people of this land to be puppets of other nations. We don't want to give up even an inch of our land or a single citizen. These are all we want! If this is a crime of any kind then we should be informed by the authorities so we can stop committing this crime of writing and thinking. If this is not a crime, then they should stop stabbing us in the back!

Village Institutes were promising educational institutions. They were cradles of cultural enrichment.

What about the understanding of independence? Until recently, we were standing upright against nations of millions, but now we even bow to puppet nations.

We had separated religion from the state, but now we are producing bigots with the help of the state. Such revolutionary people! They reversed the 25-year revolution in 25 weeks. The hell with those who regard their interest above the national interest! The hell with those who for their own interest forcefully try to keep this nation in the darkness of ignorance! The hell with those who do not believe in any doctrine hence in any idea. The hell with those who are the enemies of education and basic humanly traits!

As we all know Henry Wallace, the ex-vice president of the USA, stood up against imperialism. He is fighting with his own government for the independence and freedom of smaller nations. When we try to inform public that the gift of Atatürk, The Republic, is in danger we get sworn at. Sort of like in our case, Wallace is being attacked by his own state. Here are some headlines from our national newspapers: "Our number one enemy communist Wallace", "Shameless, arrogant creature!" "Wallace is being ridiculous!" And more comments like this...Whereas Wallace said: "The big nations are trying to take over and share

the small nations. Those small nations should support each other to defend themselves.” We absolutely agree with Wallace.

Government supposedly has been trying to lower the cost of living. To achieve this they will bring an expert from the USA. We don't think this administration can solve this problem, since 70% of the merchandise in our market is made in USA. Even the tariff has been cut down by half to help the US export. Just like a French journalist indicated once: “The cost of living can only be cut down by independent, national economical policy.” However, this administration does not even have any indication of independent economy. Our hands are tied when it comes to the USA.

HALUK YETİŞ: Aziz Nesin was also writing besides Mr. Sabahattin. He was in charge of almost all of the writing...M. Uykusuz was illustrating...Two months later Rifat Ilgaz also joined us. He took the load from Aziz Nesin's shoulders. In addition to being the director of Markopasha I was also taking care of the finances. Mr. Sabahattin had trust in me. He never asked me about the account, never questioned me about it. I still feel proud for this.

He would live his writing with us and leave right away. He did not spend much time with the administration. He was a very energetic man. Here now, there in a minute! He was kind of like mercury...He would often visit his family in Ankara. He was very fond of his family, especially of his daughter.

(The men in mask make a phone call, he quietly orders someone...)

AZİZ NESİN: Dear Sabahattin to tell you in short, Markopasha is selling great.

Its circulation has gone up especially in Anatolia. The money is rolling...

However the Governor's Office is causing some trouble. Almost everyday they send us some documents to fill out. As if we have something incomplete. They are trying to stop us by rolling these bureaucratic stones before us. You have thundered orders and criticized me in your letter. I don't like the esthetics and the political content of my own writings either. I have no claims. I read them to everybody and get their opinions before publishing them. I know you are more experienced than I, and I welcome your logical criticism. I will take your criticism, put it through sieve of my own discretion, and discuss it with you. However, I do not like dry orders! I want you to know that.

This newspaper is mine too as much as it is yours. It is mine through my effort, my labor. If Markopasha loses or gets closed down I will have harder position than you will. I will feel extremely bad if you have hard time because of me for I feel so close to you. I want you to know this. Lets talk about the real issues now. We need a new press. Find some money, borrow, beg do something to find some money so we can buy a new press. Because the printing house that is printing our newspaper is under pressure now. You are talking about moving the newspaper to Ankara. I don't think it is feasible now. A change like this can effect the circulation also. Of course if anything bad happens then we have to move it to Ankara. You stay alert, and get ready for such a possibility.

I am sorry you are sick...I hope you get well soon. The last editorial article that you sent was not impressive compared to the previous ones so I did not use it in the present issue. If you insist I will publish it in the next issue but with one condition: write it over. On such an important issue you acted cowardly. Plus the writing stile was not impressive either! I guess there is nothing left to write. Say hello to all friends, and Pertev too...

RIFAT ILGAZ: The newspaper was constantly being shut down.... Whenever the sanctions were lifted we were publishing again. Mücap Oflluğlu had joined us as editor in chief for a short time.

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

MÜCAP OFLUOĞLU: We had published an article about Jews in our newspaper... About how cowards the Jews are...Sabahattin walked in to the room swiftly and with rage: “Don’t write such things in this newspaper! Jews are fighting against the British... You can not make fun of nations fighting for their freedom. You can not make fun of any nation! Especially Markopasha can not be the tool for this!” And he left the room with same manner...

HALUK YETİŞ: Police had started its unexpected visits frequently. Almost every week they visited the administration. We would hear a sudden knock on the door and the so as the door opened they would gush in to the room: “Freeze! Stay where you are!” They would get us lined up side by side like Muslims ready for ablution, and start searching us... **Supposedly** They were looking for some sale confirmation documents to Soviet Union! Allegedly, we had sold our country to Soviet Union...The rumor is that Markopasha sold the country to Soviet Union...We were used to being arrested and released back again. Oh God! There was an officer called Ahmet Demir at the police station. He had even beaten Aziz. We were taken in again one night. Why? Although we were told to shut down the press verbally we had not done so. Of course we had not received any written order to shut down. That day Sabahattin and Aziz were not there. Rifat, M.Uykusuz and I were arrested. They stuffed us in to a room where we have been waiting for 36 hours...Its in the morning. Everyone is up and looking out the window. We see the streets are up too, people walking and trolley passing by, but no sound! We could see everything, but not hear anything. It is like in Charlie Chaplin’s early movies, we see people get on and off...After watching outside for a while M. Uykusuz turned to Rifat: “I can’t even tell you how much heart is filled with the desire to be on that trolley now”

RIFAT ILGAZ: Finally, Markopasha was shut down permanently. We will keep publishing of course, but under what name now?

AZİZ NESİN: Well, since they killed Markopasha, we should name it “Deceased pasha”...
(*He smiles*) People will understand right away.

SABAHATTİN ALİ (*Starts reading.*) Young friend, keep your homeland and your people above everything. Use the very reason for your presence to bring joy to this land and the people of this land. Show your affection and support to all people who want to live in peace. Don’t be fooled by those who shed blood for their own selfish profit. Regard such people as the enemies of humanity, your home and your people. Don’t encourage the foreigners who come to settle in your land; be it legally or illegally. Fight against those enemies, who plan to enslave and exploit you, with your intelligence, pen and if necessary with your blood. Don’t be fooled by those who have no faith in this nation, and who finds it necessary to depend on another countries...Don’t go after worthless and pointless adventures, because you more mature than those who are burning in superiority complex. The last and the most important don’t be fooled by those enemies who want to get you involved in dirty business. Know how to tell your friends from your enemies.
(*The men in mask makes a phone call*)

We are ready to fight with those who are the enemies of our ideas. We will fight them by writing, talking, publishing newspapers. We will fight, even if it means serving time in prison. So far everyone has witnessed how we stood up. We endured all cynical blackening and attacks. However I must say that sometimes our hands are tied against the enemy for we are not using the same weapons. We regard their weapons as so dirty and coward! To stop the

sales of a legal newspaper by black-mailing, to recollect fifty thousand newspapers already in circulation... No! This can not be our business... We are behind our enemies on this matter! My dear, unfortunate nation! You have been exploited by either outsiders or your own people who have become foreigners to themselves. You left your fate into hands of those whose interests, and pleasures, and arts and languages were foreign to you. Of course they did not have heartaches when they took you away from your family and land to send you from one front to another. When you were dying in cooking heat and drought; they were building palaces and kiosks and drinking ice-cold rakı! Sometimes, they referred to you as their slave, and sometimes as their patron, but nothing changed... If you do not take your future in to your own hands, and let others speak up for you, nothing will improve for you. Look at those whom you followed once! Now they are partners with your suppressors. What did you expect? Did you thing the wolfs yesterday would turn in to lambs by magic? Don't go after empty dreams! At times they might fight over who gets the big piece, but they will always back each other up against you! Be careful nowadays! Seems like they are sharing out your pelt!

Over a year we tried to bring up different ideas in this newspaper hoping they would challenge us with their ideas. In vane! From Gaziantep to İstanbul, from İzmir to Çarşamba over 300 hundred blackening articles have been written about us. Oh no, they did not try to refute our ideas; they only swore in those articles... "Betrayers, Bolshevik spies, enemies of democracy, Red voices of Moscov, enemies of the state, anarchists, communists" This kind of a battle was nor fun... However, one good, promising fact and is that the nation is always on our side. They know what is bad and what is good.

ALİYE: Sabahattin, I won't keep it long. Bad things are happening here. As you know I was being followed by some man. Now they have set up a camp across our home... They are on duty all the time. Everyone in the neighborhood is giving me a strange look when I take Filiz to school. Some of them obviously have pity in their looks, but most have hatred. Even your best friends can not come to our house anymore. Even if they do it is extremely rare. Worst of all the other day kids yelled at Filiz: "Daughter of a Communist!" She is so afraid. She has nightmares, and she can't even go to sleep anymore. What is this we are going through Sabahattin? What kind of a revenge they are trying to take from us? I am helpless! Please forgive me for writing all this to you, but I want you to know that I love you more than ever...

SABAHATTİN ALİ:

Not only from me,
They are getting their revenge
Also from my beloveds: Filiz and Aliye.
Yaar amanee amanee

RIFAT ILGAZ: Merhumpasha has been shut down too... Are we still going to publish?

AZİZ NESİN: Do we have any other choice? I have already found an name for it:
"Malumpasha" should be our new name...

RIFAT ILGAZ: Sabahattin was down because of what was happening to his family. He went to Ankara. We will keep going though...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: (*reads*) A newspaper was published within the borders of Turkish Republic. Just like this "newspaperette" we are holding in our hands today, a newspaper of four pages was published in İstanbul once a week... Only twenty issues of it could be

published intermittently because of interruptions. The quality of the print was so bad that the publishers were embarrassed of their readers. Even so, it held the circulation record in the country. Sixty thousand copies were sold. The technical equipment needed to publish this paper was in the hands of greedy, and coward owners who were giving us hard time with the printing prices. All the newspapers started blackening this newspaper. All the printing houses were receiving confidential orders not to print this newspaper. All of the newspaper vendors were pressured not to sell this paper... Those seven to eight year old kids who were selling this newspaper with their bare feet to make a living were arrested and their fingerprints were recorded. In addition, the first time in the counties history, the sale of this newspaper by under fifteen year olds was banned. Also those who attempted to sell this newspaper were asked to show a certificate and a health record. And there were thirty-three loud- walks arranged in Ankara, İzmir and İstanbul; all against this newspaper. This newspaper had to change four editor in chief, eleven publishing house, and was put on trial ten times. Three of its writers were sentenced consecutively. Why? Why all of this happened? Because that newspaper was fighting for true democracy so that people no longer suffered from exploitation, and poverty; so that people had rights...

İnönü was the one who signed the Lausanne Treaty that got the foreign military out of the country and let us free from foreign capital. İnönü was also the one who started the educational reforms. He was also the one who started the translation of World Classics. He is also the one who clearly declared to the world the danger of racism and Turanism.

However, these days those who have been longing for slavery under foreign capital have taken the role as patriots. The Village Institutes are already being back- transformed in to institutions like in Middle Ages. School books are being changed too. Chapters about social justice are being taken out of the books; instead Sultanate epics are being taught. There are some who are waiting at ambush for cleansing us just like Nazis did to their people. It is ironic though, İnönü is still the president. How can he not make all this stop? It is our right to expect from him to put an end to this danger.

RIFAT ILGAZ: It was such a smart writing, but the reply was prompt... Malumpasha was also gone... what do you say to this maestro Aziz?

AZİZ NESİN: OK, this time we will name it ALİ BABA... Let's see what the Forty Thieves will do this time.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: The rulers of this country don't like us today. Well, we had no expectations of such, and we did not beg for their affection. They like the governors who suppress the public's free will during elections, they like those bandits who scare folks with their knives at the election box; they like the blood sucker Gendarme of Senirkent! They like ignoring all these, forgiving them for all the wrong doings... What do we do? We try to illuminate public. How can they like us?

...

The thieves are down from the mountains, forests
Now that we are concerned about our very lives,
We gave up the worldly possessions.

RIFAT ILGAZ: It was not long before Ali Baba was also shut down... Once more we were jobless... Mr. Sabahattin started writing in Zincirli Hürriyet owned by Aybar... He runs into Celal Bayar on the way to İzmir the other day. He said Bayar was a sincere person, and has been following our struggle with respect. However, Zincirli Hürriyet was shut down in no

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time... In the mean time Sabahattin was being tried on many charges. He was sentenced to prison after his first trial and sent to Paşakapısı Prison...

SABAHATTİN ALİ:

I was an eagle in the sky,
Got shot at my wings.
I was a purple flower baring branch,
that was cut off right in the spring time.

Oh my heart, you were like a bird once,
You can not fit in the cages.
You are used to flying
You can not take prison...

HASAN TURAL: *(with a hoarse voice)* Welcome Mr. Sabahattin.

SABAHATTİN ALİ *(with suspicion)* How do you know me?

HASAN TURAL *(hardly heard)* How can I not know you? I have read all your books. Markopasha, Merhumpasha, Malumpasha...Ali Baba at last... I am one of those who likes you Mr. Sabahattin.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: What do you do?

HASAN TURAL: I am a barber... I have a shop near Edirnekapı. I mean it is a rented shop, I don't own it of course. I am an immigrant from Bulgaria...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Why are you in?

HASAN TURAL: I am not a writer like you, however I am being accused of being a communist. You know, they can find anything to accuse. How long are you going to be in?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Three months. What about you?

HASAN TURAL: I will be released in three weeks. Don't worry, you will see it will pass quickly.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I might get out of here, but I am being tried on other accounts also. So I am afraid the soon as I am out, I will be back in! Like a chain reaction...

HASAN TURAL: Just like Nazım...You are being wasted in dungeons. What is your fault? So that people like us can live in peace and prosperity.*(even more quietly)* You can trust me for everything Mr. Sabahattin. You should come and visit me when you are out. Okay?

ALİ ERTEKİN *(as if he is still on trial)* Yes, I was sent to prison only once. When I was a sergeant in the military, I was accused of stealing the lost guns. It was miss accusation, calumny! It was an ambush... Since I was speaking the truth at all times, my superiors did not like me much. I knew all about their dirty clothes so they were trying to get id of me, and they set up this ambush...I was responsible for the yard work in Kırklareli. There was a fellow

from Bakırköy, Cengiz. He came and entered in to the yard with his uniform. We got in to a discussion for this. You know soldiers can sexually harass you during military service. Had I let him in I would be accused of letting him in with uniform. Now that I have not they think I am not fro them. One day one of our commander Sermet's pals came to me asking for six hundred walnuts for the commander. I said "No"... This was not my garden for God's sake I was on duty there. Well, he would not take "no" for an answer so I told him to go pick from the trees himself. My commanders and many other superiors liked me except the lieutenants. They found the opportunity at last. One of the soldiers on guard had lost his gun. I was asked "you were on duty why did you not watch out it?" "I am just an sergeant, I am not related to this" I said. However, I was sent for trial. According to their story, I was on duty that night and fetched away the gun while the other soldier on duty fall asleep. Then they said "he has bought from outside"...Also recently I was accused of stealing bullets. Here is what had happened in fact: We were pressing brick for our regiment when suddenly rain started pouring. All of the soldiers ran for shelter. I collected what was left on the ground and placed with my belongings...Later on they must have searched my luggage to find these bullets.. I was labeled as "the bullet thief" This is how they tied everything together and expelled me from the army. All of this was spun by our commander Şükrü Polat. Here I was expelled from the army with nothing in hand. I came to İstanbul...Searching for jobs... I worked in constructions, and many other jobs I tried. I was being followed by the police. I mean by secret service agents. Those days were not like today. I found a job at Unkapanı. I worked there for two months. They came again and had me kicked from my job at Unkapanı. I was unable to find any jobs... What good if I found they would have kicked out again and again... One day my child got sick (starts crying) We had land in Yugoslavia. I am glad I had taken the documents of ownership with me when I fled to Turkey. I was hopeless... The only thing was left to do: go to Yugoslavia and sell the land. Hence, I went to Bulgaria. I was going to crass Bulgaria to Yugoslavia. However, I was caught there in the forest eating blackberries... I was kept under custody for seven days. Then they took me through Sofia and Plevne to a camp in Şumnu. I stayed there for eight days... I was able to escape on a day of a heavy snow. Since the Bulgarians took away my land ownership certificate, I decided to come back to Turkey. I was hiding in a Turkish village, but I was found and taken back to the same camp. Well, I escaped again, and this time successfully entered Turkey. I turned myself in to the police. I was kept under custody for six months while the investigation was being conducted. I was found not guilty, and acquitted. I met a Bulgarian immigrant, Barber Hasan Tural, when under custody... He was serving time for communist propaganda. Hasan said he would find me a job. However, I found a job with my own efforts in Aydın at an ice factory. I came back to İstanbul after I was laid off.. I started looking for jobs again. So I went to Barber Hasan again. He asked me to visit him often as he promised to find a job for me. I worked at street bazaars selling used clothing for a while. One day Hasan introduced me to Osman and İbrahim. "take them to border of Kırklareli" he said. So I did. I got fifty TL from Hasan. I got another fifty later. Later I learned that Osman and İbrahim were involved in drug dealing business.

RIFAT ILGAZ: His hair was all white when he was finally acquitted. We were all jobless and he joined us. He was taken back in to the prison in three months...This time he stayed in only for thirteen days. When he was out he was down even more...

MÜZEHHER VA-NU: While he was visiting us one night he told me:" Müzehher, I was locked in a cell. The wall was covered with newspaper to keep the plaster from falling. I read that newspaper from top to bottom, then from bottom to top. I memorized that newspaper. I was sad and mad and all...But I waited my days to end memorizing that newspaper. I will

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never be in prison! Never, for whatever it takes; I am never going back in!” Then he added: “Only if my daughter were a little older...”

AZİZ NESİN: Just like us he was not allowed to write anywhere. He was staying with Cimcoz’s mostly. He was drinking a lot. Once when we were drinking together, he took out his daughter’s picture, looked at it and cried...

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: Rasih Nuri İleri...He stayed at my place from time to time. At Nişantaşı. Mostly he stayed at Cimcoz’s who threw parties frequently to bring the artists together. People are not talking highly of Cimcoz family. I think you should end your relationship with them...

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Yes I hear you Rasih, but believe me I feel more secure with them.... I have nothing to cover up...Sometimes I get suspicious just like everyone else. Then I think to myself I have not seen any harm from Mr. Mehmet Ali and his wife Adalet so far. My people are creating this gossip deliberately to damage our relationship. They want us to become suspicious of everybody, and once you become suspicious...You become paranoid. I am not saying you are wrong, you might be right, but I am more educated and clever than them. I can take necessary precautions. I can not be fooled easily Rasih...

HALUK YETİŞ: He had ordered a printer from the USA, up on the request of Aziz, for which he could not pay the tariffs. He transferred the printer to a fellow named Rüşti Bey... He used this money to pay his dues to us. If I remember right he sent 900 TL to his wife. He had applied for passport to go to France. He was waiting for the passport with great hopes. “I feel like being suffocated” he was saying. It will be nice if I get away from this place for a while...”

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: I am Mehmet Aki Cimcoz, a lawyer... I guess I met Sabahattin Ali in 1946. Of course, I knew him through his witting before. He was working at Conservatory in Ankara... We became friends quickly. Whenever he came from Ankara he would visit us. We lived at Tunnel those days. He came to İstanbul when he lost his job. He and Aziz Nesin started publishing Markopaşa. As you all know Markopasha was a great success. Since they had so much problems with investigations etc and I was a lawyer, our relationship grew closer. When Markopasha was shut down for good he was jobless. With all the talent he had he was jobless and broke! We started searching for a job for Sabahattin. However, all the newspapers that he could work with were shut down, and it was impossible for him to take a government job anymore. He also liked transportation business. Those days transportation business was somehow popular anyway. There was big money in the business.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Mehmet Ali, if I had a truck I would transport to Anatolia, make living, and at the same time I could collect new material for my new stories.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: He said often... He had gotten in contact with a Jewish dealer for trucks. He wanted to buy on credit of course. The dealer was a relative of a translator, Erol Güney, whom Sabahattin knew well. The dealer says “ Mr. Sabahattin I can not sell you a truck with no down payment. Even if I could I would not sell it to you, because you are a communist. I don’t want to get in to trouble” Sabahattin told us at dinner one day. He was sad. Those days there was something called “Ses Opereti” at Ses Theatre. A fellow named Mr. Eşref was the owner. He was from Azerbaijan. I am not quite sure actually whether his name was Eşref or Şeref. Anyway, he was one of my clients. There wasn’t any worthy plays on

show there. So I told him : “Look your theatre sucks! There is a very talented play writer I know who is a teacher at the Conservatory. He knows this business very well, and in fact he is looking for a job these days. If you pay him well he might come and change your business. You will greatly benefit from him. He will change this theatre in to a classy one. You don’t know this business and your Turkish sucks!” Now I remembered his name, Ali Eşref...How could I forget it? He was excited about my idea. “Please bring him to me right away” he said. I was excited too. I found Sabahattin immediately and told him the idea.(the man in mask makes a phone call... Pulls one of the folders in front of him and talks examining the folder, however his voice was not audible)

We were preparing to go to Mr. Eşref the following day, however Mr. Eşref called and in a resentful voice “The guy you have recommended to me is a known communist and is being followed by the police. How can you recommend a guy like him to me? So Sabahattin could not get that job either...An he was feeling quite down.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Mr. Mehmet Ali I am very distressed....I feel suffocated. I had applied for a passport to get away from here, to go to Paris, Kapri...I was not issued the passport. They don’t let me work here or get out of the country. I have no idea what to do.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: He was completely broke... He could not even afford a ticket to Ankara...One day we were eating together I asked “Where do you stay?”

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I am staying at the publishing house, sleeping on the table.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: Are you out of your mind? How can you stay there in the middle of the winter? Come stay at our home. We will find a bed for you.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Thank you I don’t want to disturb you.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: I did not pay attention to him. So he started staying with us. Since my wife Adalet had he education from Germany also, there was a nice harmony in the house. After a tiring work of trials coming home to such an atmosphere was like a fresh breeze for me. The only problem was that he was jobless. One of my clients, Melek Celal, who was married to a German professor once, and moved to Germany (I am releasing her name for she is dead now) After her husband died I was taking care of her official matters. Right around this time of crisis...

MELEK CELAL: Mr. Mehmet Ali, they say transportation business is very good these days. Since I have some money as you know...Should I start a transportation business?

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: I thing it is a right decision. I even know someone who can be a great help for you.

MELEK CELAL: Lets buy a truck then.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: I told Sabahattin about the business. He was so excited that he jumped from where he was sitting and gave me a hug. He found a truck the next day. It was a bare truck. I called Mrs. Melek and she sent the money immediately. So we had the truck. Sabahattin was like a bouncing ball out of happiness.

(the man in mask makes a phone call)

The next day Mrs. Melek unexpectedly appeared at my office. Before I could say hello she started her non stop talk...

MELEK CELAL: What have you done? You have made me partners with a communist!

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

This fellow is a very well know story and novel writer. He is one of the distinguished writers of our country. Look! Look at his books. He wanted to be in transportation business not only to make money but also to get to know his people. Mrs. Melek paused after she took a look at the books. She herself was a painter. Taking advantage of her pause “you will be helping an artist like yourself!” I said. She seemed relaxed. However, she goes to the chief of the police headquarters, Kemal Aygün, after she leaves my office. She tells him the story...His reaction: “ Oh my God! What have you done madam?” Then she came back to me.

MELEK CELAL: You have ruined me! What am a supposed to do now? You have to straighten this.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ(to himself) How can I straighten? We have bought the truck...Done all the work...If I take this truck from Sabahattin he certainly will die. (to Melek Celal) Look if you have any trust in me; let's register the truck under my wife Adalet. She won't take a penny from you. She will look like the owner of the truck that's all. You will take all the money. What do you say?

MELEK CELAL: (after thinking a bit) Okay.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: So we registered the truck under my wife's name. We had an obstacle for registration process since the owner required to be the member of Driver's Association. So, Adalet became a member... Then we said “hurray” to Sabahattin. It was end of the winter beginning of spring so the weather was rainy. Sabahattin had bought some goodies to transport to Adana then to Maraş from there. He had also found a driver. So both left. We could not hear from them after they left. We were getting worried. We were looking at the newspapers for any news related to them. “There was a flood...A road has collapsed...” Mrs. Melek calls frequently..

MELEK CELAL: Any news from the truck?

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: “Don't worry, everything is fine!” I was saying, but I was worried of course. I was cursing myself for getting involved in this. During all this, Sabahattin showed up one day. Apparently, they load everything to a train due to bad weather conditions. They take the train o Adana. On their way back they break the spring of the truck. So in the end our first trip ended with loss instead of profit. I had to tell Mrs. Melek that due to bad weather conditions the business was bad and the profit was low. I paid her some money out of my pocket without even telling my wife. Sabahattin started transporting again. Regardless of his meticulous work he was not having a good business. Each time something was going wrong. Either they were not able to find anything to transport back or the new tires of the truck were flat... Although we were paying Mrs. Melek some money ,she was not happy with it. She was thinking of this as a bad investment.

ALİ ERTEKİN: Few months later Hasan told me “I found a job for you. You will be working at a truck, a truck that is owned by a rich woman. There is a fellow named Ali Bey as an assistant. He will soon transfer to another job. However, he will go on work trips with you for you to learn this job. You will earn 150 TL per month. Later you will earn 250TL per month...” He introduced us to each other at a coffee house. Mr. Ali was wearing glasses...

FİLİZ: It was a cold, snowy day of February in Ankara. I was in the fifth grade in elementary school. I could not see my father that winter. I could understand from his talk to my mother that things were not quite all right. Whenever I showed up they would stop their talk. Supposedly they did not want me to be sad. One night we heard a car honk in front of our house. We ran to the window. A man with boots, a winter coat and a driver kalpak... This is my father!... He is in transportation business now! I was not used to seeing father in such clothing. He embraced me and mom. He says he is coming from Urfa. “I am the traveler of this country now” he said to mom and they laughed together. I did not want him to leave us and go anymore. They started talking after I pretended to be asleep. He left the next morning. Then the letters and presents started again... Then everything stopped... Mom and our friends were worried. They were talking... “Paşakapısı Cezaevi”... “He is hiding...” “He will be put in prison if he is found”... “His hair is all white...” “the press trials are like nightmares”... “he can not take imprisonment anymore”... Mother is crying all the time. I am trying to understand what is happening...

MÜZEHHER VA-NU: He came to our house in the middle of the night. He, Vala and I talked. He would always make us laugh however, this time the expression on his face was quite different. It was filled with sorrow. Suddenly “I am playing with fire, I am playing with fire” he said and left. How could we know that this was the last time we were to see him.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: He showed up at our place one night. He was coming from the road again. He was tired.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: (with a timid voice) Look Rasih..I wan to talk to you about some important issues.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: we walked to the inner room where he usually slept.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: urn on the radio for music...

RASİH NURİ İLERİ (confused) What kind?

SABAHATTİN ALİ (keeping his seriousness) I would like it if it is classical.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ (trying all channels he finds..) We are lucky!

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Turn the volume up a little more... (after the music gets louder) I trust you with all my heart. You are one of those few friends that I trust fully. I am not sure any more who is the friend and who is the enemy anymore. I don't trust anyone anymore. Everyone seems friendly however the arms of betrayal is everywhere. You have not done anything to break my trust in you. So I want you to know this first.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: What is it? You are making me worried.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: I have been in transportation business. An it sucks. These are not the jobs we can do. So what can I do? I am not allowed to work anywhere. I can be taken in anytime. I can not take imprisonment anymore. My hair turned all white in one night. I have nothing else left to change color or to turn white anymore. If you remember I had mentioned a barber named Hasan to you...Paşakapısı, Edirnekapı....Yes through him I met this fellow named Ali Ertekin...He is an immigrant from Yugoslavia. He will help me escape the country.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: How can you trust someone you have just met? Who is he? How can you decide before you know who exactly he is?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Don't even dig in to such things... You know I am a smart guy. I have taken necessary precautions. There are few things I want from you. I will write two letters here. One for my wife and the other will be given to Mehmet Ali Cimcoz, but not via mail by hand. I don't trust the mail. You can deliver the one for Cimcoz during the day yourself, and give my wife's letter to Cevdet Kudret. Make sure that they don't receive the letters before I escape. Okay?

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: No, I did not understand! As far as I understand these letters will be given to the owners after you escape, but how would I know you escaped?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: This is where the trick is...I will sign a paper and give it to Ali Ertekin as soon as I cross the border. He knows he will be given a card, but he does not know what kind of a card it is. This card will have nothing but my signature on it. As I said Ali does not know this. He will bring the card to Barber Hasan, and take his money. Since I do not trust him I want him to get paid after he completes his job. He will take 250TL. It is a lot of money. This is his profession... Did you get it?

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: As far as I understand you trust Hasan. Why?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: Why do I believe you?

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: But he is different from me.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: He is different too Rasih!

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: Tell me how I would know that you escaped.

SABAHATTİN ALİ: You will go to Barber Hasan two days after I leave. You will get a hair cut. Then "I think I dropped a piece of paper" you will say. When he hears you he will give you the letter from Ali Ertekin. Then you will know I have escaped. Don't forget if the card has only my signature I crossed the border, but if the card has something on it which only you can know then I could not cross the border. Also don't forget neither Barber Hasan nor Ali Ertekin know you...The only thing Hasan knows that someone will go and pick up the letter. So there is no danger involved for you.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: When are you hitting the road?

SABAHATTİN ALİ: This morning... I will be happy if you can help me get my suitcase ready while I write the letters.

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: we got his suitcase ready. We put two copies of each of his works published in Turkey in the suitcase... His suitcase was like a mobile bookcase. He made me read both of the letters before he closed them. We waited for the morning. In the morning, we said good bye to each other, and he left.

ALİ ERTEKİN: I and Mr. Ali headed to Kırklareli from Edirnekapı to get cheese... Truck driver was a fellow named Salim.... when we arrived at Kırklareli Mr. Ali let the driver go,

and “You will take me to Bulgaria just like you did to Osman and İbrahim” he said to me. I wanted to say I did not know it was going to happen like this, but he shut me up “What difference would it make? Here is a good job for you. You will still have your current job even if I am not here anymore” he added. We started walking. It was night. We were somewhere between Üsküp and Yündolan headed towards Sazara Village...Step by step we were getting close to the Bulgarian border. Here he told me that he was the owner of Markopaşha Newspaper, Sabahattin Ali. This was not the first time I heard his name. I was shocked... So this was Sabahattin Ali... I was startled. I could not take a breath for a moment.... Because I knew Sabahattin Ali was a communist. So I was going to help Sabahattin Ali escape? I was very mad at Hasan Tural, because he was the one who did not tell me that this was Sabahattin Ali and not just any Mr. Ali. He told me that Mr. Ali was in transportation business. I don't like communists, but I should not let him notice this. I would not want him to get suspicious. I should gain his trust so he can start telling me... Just the way I did it to Hasan. I listened to him with a smile on my face. I had to make him trust me. He could do anything to me. I was not even sure if he had a gun. What if he shoots me?

Sabahattin Ali: “I have not told anyone about this. Even the driver Salim does not know. My goal is to achieve big in Bulgaria. I will never forget you; you will get your share for doing this for me. I will go to Tırnovacık first. From there to Sofia and then to Moscow...Then I will get a Czechoslovakian passport. To Rome and then to Paris....Then I will get back to Bulgaria. I will return to Turkey with an army of communist Turkish students abroad and rescue our country. We will take over the current administration. We will give you a good position after this” I was furious, because I hate Bulgarians and Russians. My father was telling us all the awful things Russians had done to my grandfather. During the war of 93 they cut the throats of our people. Bulgarians are the same. There is no nation more cruel than Bulgarians. They killed my father. Although when they were trying to shoot my father we were screaming “we surrender.. we surrender” they went on and shot my father. So this man has made deals with Bulgarians...So this man wants to see Bulgarians and Russians on our land. He wanted these enemies to govern us. He was a traitor! He could not be a Turk! Think about it, he wants to escape and get stronger, return back, and destroy our country...He should not know about what I think...He should trust me... “Thank you Mr. Ali” I said. He kept talking: “You will get 150 TL from your current job, however after I leave it will increase to 250 TL. Because you will do my job too.” We were at a place where shepherds pass through often. He was very tired. It was night already. There was a creek next to us... we set a fire and set down. “we should settle here” I said. “Otherwise we will get lost in the forest”

“ You will help two more people escape after me” he said. “ Don't ask about their name for I won't tell. You will learn later on...” For him to trust me even more: “They will catch you in Bulgaria. They did to me, I could hardly escape from their hands.” I said. He was so sure of himself. He smiled: “ The Russian Consulate informed the Bulgarians. They are waiting for me,” he said and added: “These things are becoming burden to me. You keep my suitcase and other belongings: one camera, clothes, and other things...” I took them. So he had people even states to trust inside and outside country... He is telling me by his own words....He is related to Russian Consulate too. He is arranging with Russians to be welcomed in Bulgaria. He is a true traitor...And I was going to help him escape huh? (starts crying again) I had to get this monster arrested. .. God knows what he had inside the duffle bag he had. May be classified information about our country... There was a stick right next to me....we had made this stick to help us walk. I got up quietly and grabbed the stick without him noticing it. He had leaned against a tree reading one of those harmful things again! I walked towards him with the stick quietly, and hit him on the left side of his head with all my strength. ..His face, glasses, and ears were covered with blood...I hit him few more times with a great passion... He collapsed down on his right side. Blood was running through his nose and mouth, but he was still

breathing. There had to be somebody to turn him in, but there was nobody at sight. Yet, many shepherds pass by here on a casual day. I mustn't let him be alone since he was still alive. I hit him hard the third time... He stopped breathing...He was dead! However I was still not sure of his death. So I took a mirror out of my pocket and held it to his nose...The mirror did not get foggy...So I did not have to stay there any longer. I left the place briskly taking his belongings with me.

SABAHATTİN ALİ:

Cracked is the bottom of my coffin,
My murderer is more degenerated than I,
I knife went through my heart
Yar amaaan amaan!

RASİH NURİ İLERİ: I waited for about fifteen days. I did not go to Barber Hasan, because I did not care about the signed card. I was thinking Sabahattin Ali's escape would appear in the newspapers internationally...He was known by International community too...As a matter of fact I was afraid of going to Hasan. What if his barber shop is surrounded? I will get in to trouble too. Also, how reliable is Hasan? Yes, Sabahattin had trust in Hasan, but Sabahattin is kind of naive, and he can be deceived easily. Since he has a pure heart he trusts people readily. However, not delivering the letters started bothering me. I could no longer wait. Taking a friend along with me I went to Barber Hasan. I left him outside the shop just in case. I set in the barber chair... "Just my beard" I said. There was another younger person working with him who was shaving another customer...I did not feel **courageous** enough to ask him anything. Apparently, Hasan was suspicious of someone so he was sending me signals through mail not to talk. The other customer left. The helper is swiping the floors. "Don't you serve tea here?" I said. "go get tea" Hasan ordered. So the helper ran to the tea house. "I think I dropped a piece of paper" I said. "What kind of a paper" he asked. "It is just a small card with a signature on it" "Just a second" he said. He went inside and came back with the paper as if he pulled it from the trash can. The signature was Sabahattin's. There is nothing else, even a dot, on it. So he must have crossed the border. I did not even wait for the tea.. Everything looked normal. I left the shop with my friend.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: I think it had been fifteen days since I had last seen him. I came home late at night. As I unlocked my door, I noticed an envelope inserted under the door. I took the envelope. It was Sabahattin's handwriting...He always wrote with green ink. Just like this one. It said: "Mr. Mehmet Ali Cimcoz" on the envelope. I opened the envelope and read: "My dear friends Mehmet Ali and Adalet, when you receive this letter I will be gone for a while. I had been thinking about finding a direction for my life, and I made this decision. After Aliye and Filiz you are the most important people in my life. I tried everything in my power not to cause you any harm. Please forgive if I have caused you any trouble unintentionally. I am hoping we will keep communicating. And I know we will meet again, but under different conditions. I could have reached to this decision if it were not for you and my family. I could nor live under such conditions anymore. I have not caused harm to anyone except my own self. Now, I have decided not to cause harm to my own self either. Soon a fellow will come to you. He will give you my name. His name is Hasan. You can have him work in the truck in my place. You can fully trust him. I would like you to forgive me and remember me with love until we see each other again..." If you were going to escape, why did you get me involved in such a business? He has escaped! Why did you get me involved? Most probably he snuggled outside the country. Another voice inside me says "What should

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he have done? The transportation business was not doing well, he could not get jobs...in and out of prison...He would rot in dungeons! Two days later the driver arrived.

DRIVER SALİM: The truck is in front of the house sir... Do you have any requests?

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: It has been seventeen days. Why did you not come earlier? More important, where is Sabahattin?

DRIVER SALİM: I swear to God I have no idea! We hit the road in the morning, and picked up another fellow from Edirnekapı. His name was Mr. Ali. We went to a place near Trakya. It could have been Çorlu. He asked me to deliver the cheese to the address, and return back to İstanbul and to you. He asked me to turn the truck in to you and give you this envelope. Then he left with Mr. Ali.

MEHMET ALİ CİMCOZ: So why did you not come immediately, why are you so late?

DRIVER SALİM: Sorry I had to make many stops...

ALİYE: one day Cevded Kudret and his wife invited me over... “Rasih Nuri has brought you a letter from Sabahattin, please read immediately.” They said. They were afraid. They left the room leaving me alone. The letter started with: “My Dear Wife, when you receive this letter I will either be in Italy, France or London...As soon as Filiz finishes school you will come too. Mehmet Ali Aybar and Mahmut Dikerdem will give you support. I will be sending you money through İş Bankası. Also Rauf will send you some money from the press printer. I know you are good on spending money. Thousands of kisses and hugs to you and Filiz. Sabahattin”. I examined the signature. It belonged to him. Yet, he had written the letter with green ink... At first I cried...then I felt happy, then cried again...

HASAN İZETTİN DİNAMO: I was reading the newspaper in the morning, and this news caught my attention: “On June 16, 1948 a shepherd named Şükrü from the city of Kırklareli’s Üsküp county, notifies Gendarme Headquarters that while he was grazing his animals he found a dead body in a ditch that is 50 Km. away from the road of Hediye Village which he thinks has been dead for four to five months. Upon his notification an investigation has started, however the identity of the body has not been determined yet.”

FİLİZ: It had been so long...No news from my father...I was attending middle school section of Ankara Girls High School. I was a very good student. During a class, one of our older peers from upper classes, runner brother Üner, comes in and whispers something to my teacher looking at me. I felt pain in my heart when the teacher nodded her head looking at me...Brother Üner came to me: “Come with me Filiz...There is someone who wants to see you” he said. We went to the front yard of the school. Two men standing there, and waiting for me...One of them has a camera in his hand...The other one got closer to us, and to brother Üner: “Is she his daughter?” “Yes”. Since he is asking “Is she his daughter” what could it be? I knew there was something wrong with my father right away...They took my picture...I ran back to the class. It was the last class of the day anyway. The school bell rang. I went home. I did not mention anything to my mother...After a while our door bell rang...Again two young journalists...One of them asking my mom “ We were informed about the murder of your husband, however we have learned that in fact he snuggled out of the country. What do you think about this?” Mother keeps silent...She does not answer the question...As if she turned mute. The journalist is taking pictures...They leave...Mom remains silent all night long...

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She embraces me, holds me tight. Was she trying to take refuge in me or I in her? The next day in the news: “Sabahattin Ali’s wife said whatever happened to him it happened because of these books”...It said “Daughter of the murdered” under my picture in the newspaper...And Ali Ertekin who claims to have murdered my father out of his patriotic feelings...

SEVGİ SANLI: So strange that just like **Antioğne’s** brother **Polüneiks’s** body, Sabahattin Ali’s body stayed **un-buried** for months...

MEDİHA ESENEL: Ali Ertekin was put on trial on April 30, 1949. He said the same thing during all trials:

ALİ ERTEKİN: I murdered Sabahattin Ali... However, It was not my intention to kill him, I just wanted to knock him out to have him arrested...I certainly did not murder him to take his money or belongings. I did it out of my patriotic feelings. I believe I have served my country by doing this, and I expect applause from you...

MEDİHA ESENEL: Many witnesses took stand... One of them was Şükrü Polat who was once the superior of Ali Ertekin in the military. He was a lieutenant, but was in civil clothing. He was a very healthy and bright looking person. His behavior was so convincing, and he appeared so trustworthy (*those who are witnesses talk as if there are in the trial*)

ŞÜKRÜ POLAT: When I was the Captain, Ali Ertekin was breached noncommissioned officer. He was put on trial for stealing guns and expelled from military. He never felt sorry for stealing. He is very dishonest and deceitful. He knows how to hide his emotions very well. He is sneaky and very cruel. I think he is capable of any kind of crime. He can even murder...

ALİ ERTEKİN: Just like in the past he hates me. He holds grudge. He is not speaking the truth. I do not accept his accusations.

MEDİHA ESENEL: There came an interesting written deposition from Akhisar. Apparently, Ali Ertekin goes to Akhisar to sell goods with the help of one of his relatives, Hasan Dağbasan, and his step son, Şaban Bölükbaşı. These two fellows give a joint deposition: “Ali Ertekin came to Akhisar about six months before his arrest. He had a suitcase that had a long brown coat, a hat, an ink-pen, clothes, and a camera in it. He wanted us to sell these. When I went to a photo-shop to sell the camera, the prosecutor saw me and asked me to go down to his office with him. He said he was interested in the camera so I went. I am not sure how it happened, but at this time Ali Ertekin vanished. Up on this they asked me to bring all the stuff Ali left to the prosecutor’s office. I was only trying to make a sale. Then, months later I learned that Ali Ertekin has been arrested.”

ALİ ERTEKİN: I did not take those things to Akhisar to sell, I wanted them to be stashed away. Just because of this, I had put an expensive price on the camera, 150 TL. Sabahattin Ali had two other friends who were also trying to escape out of the country. I did not want to sell those things so I could help those two fellows surface.

ŞOFÖR SALİM: I met Sabahattin Ali in Paşakapısı Prison. I was in due to a traffic violation. After we were released he found me and offered me a job as a truck driver. I took the 250 TL monthly payment offer, and started the job. This was our last job... We picked up Ali Ertekin on our way...I had not met Ali Ertekin before. Mr. Sabahattin had introduced him to me as a

cheese merchant. We had arrived in Kırklareli at noon. At the entrance of the city Ali Ertekin: “Drop me here. I will go to a cheese farm for negotiation. We will meet here,” said and left. We went to a coffee house and waited there for about eight hours. Ali Ertekin had not returned yet. So we went to the place where we had dropped him. Nevertheless he came there soon and “No cheese left” he said. Up on this Mr. Sabahattin said he wanted to talk to the farmer himself. He added “The road is very muddy we can not go by the truck. You stay here and wait for us. If we are too late then don’t wait for us, load something else and return... We will talk about the money matters later...” He put 10 TL in to my palm. I said ten lira was not enough. “I have total of 600 TL, and I will buy cheese with this” he said. And they left.

They did not return that night. So the next day I took a new load and went to Babaeski from where I took a brick load and returned to Istanbul. Few days later someone leaves a note, written by a red pencil, with my wife. The note was from Sabahattin Ali: “I will have to stay at the farm. Don’t ever tell anyone, even to Mehmet Ali Cimcoz, about me. It won’t be good for you either...” I was afraid. That is why I burned the note immediately and never mentioned to anyone about it. Out of fear, I went to Mehmet Ali Cimcoz few days later and told him I and Sabahattin returned to Istanbul together.

ALİ ERTEKİN: (*mad*) Driver Salim is lying. Sabahattin Ali absolutely had no money. They did not have a talk as such related to money. I was hired as an assistant to driver Salim.

DRİVER SALİM: No! His words are well thought and calculated words. Don’t believe him. My testimony is true. How could a fellow trying to escape to Bulgaria give me his last ten liras? He really had money in his pocket... May be even more than he told me. Whether to buy cheese or escape to Bulgaria Mr. Sabahattin had money with him. For both of these tasks require money. I am sure this man killed Sabahattin Ali for his money and belongings!...

HASAN TURAL: I am Hasan Tural... I came to Turkey as a free immigrant from Bulgaria in 1938. Yes I have been convicted before. I was convicted of communist propaganda in 1946, and of trying to smuggle my brother back in to Bulgaria... I served my sentence in Harbiye Military Prison and Paşakapısı Prison later on. I met both Ali Ertekin and Sabahattin Ali in prison. I and Ali Ertekin kept in touch after being released from prison. In fact we started visiting each other as families. I heard from Ali Ertekin that he was going to work with Sabahattin Ali as an assistant. I have no idea about those who were smuggled out of the country, Osman and İbrahim, before (*Ali Ertekin listens with anger*)

I don’t know how he met Sabahattin Ali. However whenever they were at my place they would talk to each other. Sabahattin Ali would have “Markopaşa” in his pocket... I never had any money business with him. I gave the same testimony to the police. However, it was documented differently. I was only asked to sign. When I was giving testimony to the interrogating judge again I noticed this. Ali Ertekin brought the card from Sabahattin Ali. “They will look for this from you” he said. I did not want to take it. “If you don’t then I will report you as if you are involved in this whole thing also” he said. I was afraid so I took the card. Apparently this was the password... Two people from the university were to pick it up, and they did. In my alleged testimony it states that I took 450 TL to help Sabahattin Ali escape. That is not my testimony! That is a testimony fabricated to be in accordance with Ali Ertekin’s...

ALİ ERTEKİN (*gets very mad*) When I was serving my country doing this work, Hasan was working on behalf of Russian consulate against our country. His words are not trustworthy. He is lying, because he is a person who has always worked against our country.

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ZEKİ KAYRAKLI: My name is Zeki Kayraklı...I met Ali Ertekin when he was under arrest at Central Station. I followed him for quite a while for there was a report on him for smuggling İbrahim and Osman to Bulgaria. Hence, we assigned one of our officers, Cemal, to follow him. Cemal offered Ali Ertekin a hundred liras to smuggle him to Bulgaria... *(His voice becomes inaudible)*

MÜZEHHER VA-NU: At extended trials the secret service officers were asked to talk in private sessions. It was declared that Ertekin took monetary award from the Security General twice. Finally the trials ended... There was the news on October 5th, 1950 in one of the newspapers: "Sabahattin Ali's killer has been sentenced to jail for four years. The murderer Ali Ertekin thanked the judge" Later Ali Ertekin was released due to an amnesty.

MEDİHA ESENEL: Years later I saw a man around Anadolu Hisarı. He looked like a vagrant. Other two gentleman passing by pointed at him and said " This is Sabahattin Ali's killer" "He walks like an innocent man as if nothing happened"

THE MEN IN MASK*(to the audience)* We do our job... At any time...Under any condition...Because every state needs to protect itself against its enemies. How can we explain the reason of our existence if we do not conduct our job? These days things are a bit different. There is a bipolar world now: on one side a free world lead by USA, and on the other hand communism lead by Soviet Russia. ...
(his phone rings, he picks it up) Hello...*(listens)* Connect...*(waits)* *(In English):* Yes... Yes I am... Thank you...And you? *(listens)*Yes... yes.. yes.. Okay...*(puts the phone down)*

KEMAL BAYRAM: I am Kemal Bayram Çukurkavaklı...It had been years since none of Sabahattin Ali's works has been published in our country...He was ignored. They wanted him to be forgotten. However, in 1965. His works started being published again. It would be interesting to have Ali Ertekin talk, after thirty years, for a book I was writing named Sabahattin Ali Olayı. I came from Ankara to İstanbul, and looked for him every where for twenty-five days. I looked for him in Rami, Sarıyer, Fatih, Koca Mustafa Paşa, Kartal, Kadıköy, Eyüp...

(during this time Ali Ertekin is trying to put make up on for after 30 years)

I could not find him. Finally, I found out that he had retired from Social Security...I asked them, but could not find him. I was told he could be dead. Some said we would know if he was dead...At the end, I found his address from a journalist who had lived with him in the same neighborhood a while ago. He lived in a house with his wife at Anadolu Hisarı in Yenimahalle district near Göksu Creek. It was a pink, two story house with steep stairs that was surrounded by roses. On one of the floors they had a tenant. He and his wife both had been retired. Is this Ali Ertekin's house?

WOMAN: Why are you asking? Why are you looking for him?

KEMAL BAYRAM: I am a journalist. ..I want to meet him...

WOMAN: Enough is enough! It has been thirty years now. Have you not forgotten about it yet?

KEMAL BAYRAM: I have no bad intentions. Only I want him to tell the story again while I ask him few questions. Just for the book I will be publishing...Please help me!

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WOMAN: If you only speak to him in my existence, yes.

KEMAL BAYRAM: OK... *(walking towards Ali Ertekin) (Ali Ertekin sited in a chair with a book in his hand. Up on arrival of Kemal Bayram he places the book on the end table next to him. Without standing up, he looks at Kemal Bayram with questions in his eyes)*

KEMAL BAYRAM: *(he looks at thee book on the end table...to the audience)* A book from Sabahattin Ali... Isn't this interesting...Years later, a person who claims to have murdered Sabahattin Ali is reading his books... *(To Ali Ertekin)* It has been thirty years... Now it is time you told us the truth behind this story...Are you really the one who murdered Sabahattin Ali?

(Ali Ertekin pauses for a while. Music gets lauder when he starts talking without forcing his memory at all...His voice is not audible however one can see his mouth in motion)
Monotonous talk... As light focuses on Ali Ertekin and Sabahattin Ali's book...

LAMENT FOR SABAHATTİN ALİ

We gave the lamb to the wolf,
Save him we said.
Unfortunately it could not,
He was left in executioner's hands

The soft face of infidelity
Deceived him insidiously
How could he believe them?
He gave his life to a smile

Puskin and Gorky on one side
Nesimi on the other.
And his reading glasses on one side,
The killer stick on the other

Is it worthy of him?
To die like this?
What did he dream of all his life
Other than a beautiful world?

Yet, is it possible to murder
A man like him?
Can the world he created
Also be buried with him?

SABAHATTİN ALİ

Are you aware that
You have become a

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

Spring,
A split heart,
A split rock
Just like Kübele.

You have become a breeze,
breeze that whispers through the mother earth.

You have become a tree
Are you aware?
A creek,
A warrior of freedom,
A flower.

You have become kids
From
İğdere
Trakya
And
Türkiye...

by Cengiz Bektaş.

CASE of SABAHATTİN ALİ

by Ataol Behramoğlu

With no doubt Sabahattin Ali is one of the greatest and most talented writers of our time. Just like Nazım Hikmet who is the distinguished creator of the social awareness in modern Turkish poetry, the same honor belongs to Sabahattin Ali in writing.

Kuyucaklı Yusuf, whose content is concerned with socialism and realistic issues of the society, is his masterpiece. Had he not wrote *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, I can't imagine we would have any realistic Turkish literature afterwards...

Each of his stories is unique representation of their categories, and all are invaluable treasures of our contemporary literature. *Yeni Hayat*, which falls into category of both novel and short story, is also unique with its content of dramatic suspense and humanitarian essence. With only two pages, *Kağm* is a unique work in which expressionist depiction meets the bitter truth. In all of his work, his romantic personality, his socialist beliefs, his ironic mind and a heart that is dedicated to happiness of people can easily be sensed.

I always remember a picture. A picture in which Hitler's propaganda minister Gobels and Police Chief of Istanbul are standing in front of today's Tarihi Sultanahmet Köftçisi (a Turkish fast food place) inspecting the Blue Mosque from a distance. I think none of us are fools to believe that this minister came to Turkey to inspect historical sites or have a fun dinner accompanied with rakı and fish... I think this picture, which has been taken probably in the beginning of 1940s, is an evidence of collaboration between local executioners and Gestapo...

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

If I am not wrong, in one of his letters to his family from a prison in Ankara, he mentions about reading *When Paris Falls* by Ilya Ehrenburg and thinking of writing a novel named “Ankara”... He never writes this novel. Just like many other he could have written had he lived longer. His murder is not only tragic but also vicious and ugly. The dirty hands that are behind his hit man is in fact clearly known...

The expression “Intellectual without a spine” which I first heard from Mehmet Ali Aybar belongs to Sabahattin Ali. This expression has been used to describe the coward, slippery, and traitor “intellectuals”. On the other hand intellectuals like Tuncer Cücenoglu are those who are true intellectuals. His play that is based on Sabahattin Ali’s murder clearly reflects this. Sabahattin Ali’s Murder can not be forgotten and should not be, because his murder was not random. It was the start of state-organized murders.

Tuncer Cücenoglu, as a responsible citizen, has accomplished a big task for opening up the murder of Sabahattin Ali again.

İstanbul, 23.04.03

A DOCUMENTARY of an INTELLECTUAL: SABAHATTİN ALİ

by Prof. Dr. Hülya Nutku

In the past 20 years many play writers have shown great effort to bring the life of those who have contributed to art to the stage. Hence, they have reminded the young generations that they should appreciate their intellectuals.

Müşfik Kenter with *Bir Garip Orhan Veli* (Murathan Mungan), Sönmez Atasoy with *Kendi Gökyüzümüz* (Yahya Kemal) Rüştü Asyalı with *Ben Bir İnsan*, Genco Erkal with *İnsanlarım* Dilek Türker with *Mutlu ol Nazım* (Ataol Behramoğlu) Orhan Asena with *Nazım Üçlemesi* have introduced these great poets to us bringing them to life on stage. In addition to all these Genco Erkal’s *Can* (about Can Yücel) is a nice interpretation. Tuncer Cücenoglu’s play *Neyzen* which has been put on the stage by Işıl Kasapoğlu and Burak Sergen is a very successful work.

It is great to see that Sabahattin Ali, who probably has not received the recognition that he deserves, is not forgotten.

Tuncer Cücenoglu has taken a great responsibility by writing this play which is a documentary. He also recommended in a newspaper interview that stages like Ankara State Conservatory be given the name of Sabahattin Ali since he contributed so much to these places. In a program (Five N One K) that was broadcasted by CNN Turk, some allegations on Sabahattin Ali’s murder were discussed. However, it is clear that there still remains unanswered questions.

Tuncer Cücenoglu in his play tries as an intellectual to make his point about dark hands and democracy. Mr. Cücenoglu is moved by the grief of Sabahattin Ali’s untimely death; the fact that he could have produced many other works had he not been murdered.

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

Tuncer Cücenoglu says his play is a documentary. He wanted the young generations to learn about Sabahattin Ali. Although the play becomes static at some points, it can be transformed into a more interesting play by addition of some pictures. Some parts can be omitted to make the play more continuous. With the addition of the melody of “do not worry my soul do not worry” the play can be made colorful. Tuncer Cücenoglu is offering us a great investigative work.

Sabahattin Ali’s murder is the first murder of an intellectual after the founding of Turkish Republic. He has been falsely portrayed as a “traitor” All of this is a shame for our democracy. Sabahattin Ali’s only weapon was his pen. He was an intellectual fighting for equality with his writings. Tuncer Cücenoglu tells new generation that Sabahattin Ali was in fact also a teacher. To Tuncer Cücenoglu Sabahattin Ali was a “sliding star in our skies” Sabahattin Ali, the writer of *Değirmen*, *Kağrı*, *Ses*, *Sırça Köşk*, *Kuyucaklı Yusuf*, *İçimizdeki Şeytan*, *Kürk Mantolu Madonna* also has a book of his poems called *Dağlar ve Rüzgar*.

As he wrote:

If one day I am appreciated,
And my whereabouts is wondered
My residence is the mountains.

Tuncer Cücenoglu once again has completed an important task as an intellectual by bringing up the murder of this great writer and intellectual. It is up to the younger generation to give the respect Sabahattin Ali deserves from them.

A LETTER

Dear Tuncer Cücenoglu,

I am writing to you right after finishing the reading of your last play *Sabahattin Ali*. This is really an unique play! As I was reading the play I could feel all the events as if it were a movie.

The language you have used is so simple yet very moving. Believe it or not at the end of my reading I was about to cry.

As you know well we are not foreign to such events either. We have lost many of our intellectuals the same way. When we read the life stories of such people we are stunned to see how they endured all that happened to them. I guess great people also have great troubles in their lives.

This is a play that forces us to think philosophically. Obviously much effort, thought and talent has been put in to this play. It can be easily understood from the play that you adore Sabahattin Ali and you are proud for your nation to have had such a great writer.

With no doubt this is one of your best works. However, a great task is awaiting for the players. Are you planning to stage this play? Please let me know for I find it very interesting. My ultimate desire is to see this play on stage. I hope it becomes true. I would love to see the play together with you just like the day we saw Neyzen together. Those are some moments in my life that I treasure. I admire you now. After completing a task as an intellectual you must be relieved. I wish it lasts forever.

I congratulate you. I thank you for asking my opinion about your play.

Sincerely,

Elena Oganova

Russian Turcologist

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

University of Moscow

HEALTH to YOUR HANDS and MIND

by Şakir Gürzumar, Stage Director, 25-4-2003

With no hesitation we can say that Tuncer Cücenöğlü is one of the most prolific play writers for Turkish theatre. He does not write just so he writes something. Through all of his plays he tries to give a message to people. He has never been detached from his people and the rest of the world. The key for his success comes from his sensitivity to the social problems. Everyone who knows him know that he has such a passion for people. He is a great human being. Isn't it the main rule of being an artist anyway: being a true human and loving the soil you live on; to be aware of what goes around the world and respond to it in a proper manner. This is how I can describe Tuncer Cücenöğlü. Along with his sensitivity, his creativeness and fantastic ideas have made him one of the most read and played writers. Many of his works have been translated to many other languages and put on stage in many different countries. Shortly, he is one of our honorable writers whom we are proud of.

I read his last play, Sabahattin Ali, with great excitement...

It is a carefully written tragedy. It will illuminate our history. It is like a reminder lecture to all of us who loses their memory about social events quickly, irresponsibly. This play is a reflection of what occurred in the past and what might in the future. It introduces us some important figures of those days. I am sure Sabahattin Ali will receive a great recognition if put on stage. I think many directors will pay attention to this play as it deserves.

I m sure the audience will watch this play in great excitement.

Health to your hands and mind Tuncer Cücenöğlü.

CÜCENOĞLU'S LAST PLAY:

Sabahattin Ali

by Kemal Başar, Stage Director, Actor

Sabahattin Ali's story is a heart breaking story of an era. This easy to read work of Tuncer Cücenöğlü is a reflection of events that took place when Turkey was struggling for democracy. Most of the characters are well known people, be it good or bad, patriotic or traitor...

Although Cücenöğlü is a master of dialogs he prefers monologs this time. One might think that this might make it hard to put the play on the stage. However, I think it is a great opportunity for a stage director. The play gives the director flexibility for design.

In our Conservatories students are taught about writers like Shakespeare, Brecht, Moliere, Çehow, Ibsen, Dürrenmatt, Miller and Williams. Without knowledge of Turkish plays and play writers these students graduate from the conservatories. I was one of them also. I first met the plays of Turkish writers after I started my professional life at State Theatres. I took part in two plays of Tuncer Cücenöğlü: *Kördövüşü* and *Kadıncıklar*. After these plays, I

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak

wanted to know other Turkish writers. Contrary to the common belief that “we can not produce good play writers” I found many great of them. I have read Tuncer Cüenoğlu’s all plays. I was lucky to be the stage director for his play, *Kızılırmak*, in 2002. Luck for the stage director who will get a chance to put *Sabahattin Ali* on the stage.

UNTIMELY LOSS of a STAR from OUR LITERATURE

by Tuncer Cüenoğlu

During my teenage years lying flat on earth and watching the stars at night, with my friends was a passion for us...

We would wonder about how many stars were up there in the sky. Then one of us would say “there are as many stars as the hair on your head, if you do not believe you can count” Then we would keep watching the sky quietly. Now and then there would be a star that would appear so bright and than suddenly would shoot downward. “Someone died again” we would comment. We had believed that each shooting star meant a death of a person.

Born on February 25 1907 in Gümülcine until his murder on April 2, 1948 in only 41 years of his life Sabahattin Ali wrote a poetry book (Mountains and the Wind) four books of short stories (The Mill, 1935) (Ox-Chart, 1936), (Sound, 1937), (New world, 1943), (Glass Kiosk, 1947), three novels (Yusuf from Kuyucak, 1937), (The Evil within Us, 1940), (Madonna with Fur coat, 1943), and a play (Captives, 1936). He set the foundation of socio- realistic literature in Turkey. He was just like those shooting stars for our world.

A writer, regardless of where he is from, should be contrary, he should be aware of the social unjust, be against the war to promote more peaceful world for living. Only with this a writer can endure. Sabahattin Ali is a perfect example as such a writer. Unfortunately, he had to face difficulties such as losing his job, spending time in prison, and finally murdered while he was trying hard to be an honorable writer. On February 10, 1947 he wrote in tenth issue of Marko pasha with the running title of “What do we want?” In this, he wrote “ We want the people of this land be free rather than being slaves or toys of other nations. We want to protect every inch of this land and each citizen of this country from foreign attack. We don’t want enemies to settle in this country whether by force, through banks or their fake goodwill. We want our nation to determine its own future”

Up to today his views are still valid. Such views not only belonged to him but also to Uğur Mumcu, Abdi İpekçi, Bahriye Üçok, Ahmet Taner Kışlalı who also were murdered by the same dirty hands. His untimely death is heart breaking. What saddens me even more is the fact that by murdering him they murdered all wonderful works he could have produced had he lived. This gives me an everlasting heartache.

These days his works are being published by Yapı Kredi Bank. However there remains two important things to be done for him.

1) The classified state archives concerning Sabahattin Ali’s murder should be open to public since it has already been more than 50 years since he was murdered.

2) Stage of the Ankara State Conservatory should be named after Sabahattin Ali since he worked so hard along with Carl Ebert to promote this place.

I invite all of our writers and artists to complete their tasks.

Translated by Meral Akçay Çıblak