

She Cast Her Own Malady Upon Me and Slipped Away

Al-Jumhuriya, 1 October 1961.

The one who has cast her own malady upon me is Damascus Radio, and that tyrannical, transgressing faction which manages its affairs, directs its broadcasts, and compels it, at every moment, to distort the realities of things and to take upon itself the burden of lying to Syrians and non-Syrians alike, without the slightest reservation, hesitation, or shame. And the malady it has cast upon me is the claim that I did not write, of my own accord, nor from the prompting of my own conscience, nor from the reasoning of my own mind, the article that Al-Jumhuriya published on Saturday morning last — but that this article was dictated to me, and that I committed it to memory, and recited it back exactly as I had received it, and sent it to Al-Jumhuriya, which then published it exactly as it had received it from me.

As though I had become, one day, a mere instrument of government, directed to act and acting accordingly, assigned to speak and speaking accordingly. As though I had become one of those who work at Damascus Radio, or one of the writers who fill the newspapers of Damascus with whatever they are ordered to fill them with — after having, only a short while before, filled those same pages with the utter opposite of what they write now, in flat and total contradiction; having suddenly turned into champions of division after having been champions of concord, callers to separation after having been callers to unity, flatterers of rebellion after having sought out every means of satisfying the Syrian people, the whole Arab people, and those charged with the affairs of union between Egypt and Syria. And these broadcasters and writers, who shed their consciences as they shed their clothes and put new consciences on in their place, as one changes one garment for another or one shirt for another — between themselves and their own discarded consciences, and their new consciences imposed upon them by force and adopted under compulsion against their will, they know full well that I am not one of those who write other than what they feel, or say other than what their own conscience dictates to them. This they know with perfect certainty, and their old consciences believe it, and their new consciences believe it too — but they were commanded, and so they wrote; it was dictated to them, and so they spoke. And I do not know what it was that I said in that

article which they rejected with such vehement denial and found so utterly intolerable — not because their own souls truly found it intolerable, nor because their old or new consciences truly rejected it, but because their masters, this tyrannical faction in Syria, had rejected what I said, and found it intolerable, and ordered them to feign its rejection and feign finding it intolerable. For can they, or can their tyrannical, transgressing masters, deny that the Syrian people was the most devoted of all peoples to unity, the most insistent in calling for it and pressing for it? And is there anything in that which could harm this Syrian people? Or is it not, rather, in itself a vindication of them and a tribute to them? Do they deny that it was the Syrians themselves who pursued union, pressed for it, and traveled from Syria to Cairo to strive for its realization, besieging the President of the Egyptian Republic and his ministers until they accepted this union and acceded to it? And what is there in that which could demean the Syrians, or harm them, or diminish their worth? And can they deny that the Syrian people was consulted on this union through a plebiscite, and ratified it, believing in it, unanimous upon it? And what is there in that which could demean the Syrian people, or harm it, or diminish its worth? And can they then deny that the Syrian people, after this union, found repose in its homeland, and saw itself secure on its borders, and raised above the ambitions of the covetous and the designs of those who used to plot against it, scheme against it, and attempt to assail it?

The Syrian people saw all of this, and so it was cleansed of fear, and the clouds of doubt were lifted from it, and it gave itself over to a life of security, contentment, and peace of mind, with broad hope for its happy future. And can they, finally, deny that life became easier for the Syrian people after union, both in its own Syrian homeland and in the Egyptian homeland as well, so that facilities were established for it that it had not even hoped for — indeed, had not even dreamed of — and education spread within it, and it was supplied with technicians to smooth away its obstacles and ease its difficulties, and to throw open before it the doors of prosperity to their fullest extent; and can they deny that the Egyptian people dealt harshly with itself, and intensified that harshness toward itself, so that life might become easier for its Syrian brothers, and deprived itself of the energies of its own technicians so that the Syrians might prosper, and that their life might become better than it had been, and that they might advance more swiftly, with ease arriving more swiftly, and with hopes stretching before them further than they had dared to expect and sooner than they had dared to wish; and that the

Egyptian people constrained its own spending so as to provide its Syrian brothers with the funds they needed, that comprehensive reform might be realized in the Syrian homeland, a reform touching every branch of Syrian life?

No — the tyrannical, transgressing faction in Syria will not be able, nor will the writers and broadcasters compelled to serve as this tyrannical, transgressing faction's echoes be able, neither the one nor the other, to deny a single word of what I said in that article which Al-Jumhuriya published last Saturday.

All they can do is to deny a kindness done to them, to disavow a known good, to let their souls grow intolerant of the truth, and to let their consciences recoil in alarm from this reality — a reality beyond all doubt, one which the Arab League will rise to realize, driving back the falsehood of the rebels with it; and on that day they will come to know the truth of the noble verse, against every obstinate, contentious disputant who argues over what admits of no argument at all: "And say, 'The truth has come, and falsehood has vanished; indeed, falsehood was ever bound to vanish.'"

And there is one more thing I shall add now to what I said last Saturday: that this union which was established between Egypt and Syria was established upon a solemn pledge and a binding covenant — not between the two governments of Egypt and Syria, but between the two peoples, the Egyptian and the Syrian — and that this covenant is binding upon both parties, and neither may release itself from it except by the mutual consent of both parties to such a release; and that this tyrannical, transgressing faction has broken this covenant, doing wrong to itself and doing wrong to the Syrian homeland and the Syrian people.

Egypt did not negotiate a release from this covenant, nor did she attempt such negotiation, nor did she openly call for it. Rather, this faction leapt in the darkness of night, and so wronged itself, and wronged its own people, and wronged its own homeland, and wronged Egypt and her people as well, and in breaking this covenant became like "one who takes her thread, after it was strong, and unravels it into fibers again," defying the word of God, exalted is He: "And fulfill the covenant of God when you have pledged it, and do not break your oaths after having confirmed them, having made God a guarantor over you; indeed, God knows what you do."

And there applies to them the word of God, exalted is He, concerning those who break covenants and violate pledges: "Those who break the covenant of God after contracting it, and sever what God has commanded to be joined, and spread corruption in the land — it is they who are the losers."

And it was for all these reasons that the President of the Republic refused to thwart the work of this tyrannical, transgressing faction by force of arms, because he does not wish to shed Arab blood, nor does he wish to spread corruption in the land; and at the same time he refused to recognize a Syrian government before the Syrian people had been consulted, through a free and dignified plebiscite untouched by tyranny, aggression, or coercion, on the matter of this secession — because the President of the Republic neither wishes, nor ought, to compel the Syrian people to anything it does not love, nor to break the covenant and violate the pledge unless it is the Syrian people itself that desires release from this covenant and pledge; because the President of the Republic has no wish to defy the command of God, nor to depart from the faithful keeping of covenants and pledges.

And there is no doubt that this tyrannical, transgressing faction, and the writers and broadcasters compelled to serve as its echoes, will condemn this article and will find it just as intolerable as they found that earlier article — and the cauldrons of their hatred for me and their fury against me will boil over, and their newspapers and their broadcasts will rail against me; but I say to them what God commanded His Prophet to say to the hypocrites: "Die of your rage; indeed, God knows well what is in the hearts."