

To my library:

Please forgive me if I am obliged to be away from you due to the months of war. You are the best to know the meaning of war and its ravages, when Leo Tolstoy resides inside you with his masterpiece War and Peace. How could you not? When we have repeatedly reviewed the play Mother Courage and Her Children, which I decided one day to direct for the theatre. I am now no longer afraid of the horrors of war, to harm you, you have possessed the courage and bravery of a mother in defending her children. So consider all those books and plays to be your children that you guard.

My beloved library, you know that the electricity has been cut off for my family. People do not have any kind of fuel to cook food or bake their bread. I know that people search for a piece of wood, or a piece of cardboard, like searching for a needle in a haystack. Please allow the people to take whatever books they want if it will save their lives and feed their children. I know that my writer friends gave themselves for the others. My friends Chekhov, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jean Genet, Shakespeare, Mahmoud Darwish, Samih Al-Qasim, Ghannam Ghannam, Alfred Farag, Atef Abu Saif, Al-Maghout, Saadallah Wannous, Stanislavsky, Augusto Boal, and all the great ones sitting on your shelves, are happy to be burned candles to make others happy. But between us, these are bigger and more valuable than a few papers on which they are preserved. The world and I memorize what they wrote in our hearts before our minds. Therefore, I do not fear for my library, but all my fear is for the people books are found for their development.

My precious library, you are truly precious. I will never forget the day I went to Cairo in 1993 to participate in the Cairo Festival for Arab Theater Performances. All my colleagues returned carrying gifts for their families, and I returned with a large bag, loaded to the brim with the most delicious types of theater books. It was heavy and the travel was difficult. When I returned, my wife and children came to receive their gifts. They found Stanislavsky smiling at them and saying: "Forgive me and forgive this crazy theater lover".

My beloved library, wait for me. Soon I will return to you. We'll stay up until dawn, exploring human souls, the beauty and strangeness of the world, the magic and beauty of words, and the splendor and greatness of writers.

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Ali Abu Yassin