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| From:Kajetan Sternberger | To:J. Sternberger | Date:March 20, 1856 |
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[numbered at the top of page in Arabic numbers]

Prague, March 20, 1856

Dear Brother,

Today I received your letters to Julie and to me dated February 14 of this year. The latter is based on such an incorrect perception of the situation, in large part, though not entirely, through your own fault, that I can't avoid attempting to justify myself to the best of my knowledge and belief. Moreover, I need to formally recapitulate the years of our separation since 1850—and I want to do it with the naked truth.

I mention only in passing the words at the parting from our mother that will sting me forever; similarly your incredibly long letters to Prinzi in which you occasionally, once a year, mentioned us, but which we never actually got to see. I pass quickly over the fact that you never wrote us anything about Paul's death, and we had to listen to the most disgraceful rumors without being able to refute them. Finally, in 1853, your first cozy letter to us arrived, full of complaints about your destroyed relationship and plunging us into the greatest anxiety about your mental suffering. As far as I know, that was the first time you mentioned that you were short of money, and I wrote to you immediately and of my own accord that Julie and I would see to it that some was sent to you.

Now, so that you understand the point about the money correctly, pay good attention. Mother revealed to me that, since I had cost her less than you, Karl and Ludwig, I would someday receive half of her last few hundred gulden (in other words 200 florins). These I designated for you, and I told Julie that whenever she sent you money, this would be my part, that I hereby cede, because in fact Mother's 400 florins are invested in Wiedemann's inn.

Julie also took out money, but wrote me afterwards that you had let her know that it wasn't necessary to send anything, so she returned the money she had already changed. But I still left the money designated for you; that's why I could write you that you would receive money from me, but as far as I know I never specified when. That was a good thing too, since Julie's and Wiedemann's court case is not finished to this day, despite their being very sure at that time that it would be over. So the two of them are in great financial distress. And for the last year at least, a withdrawal by Mother would have been a great burden for them. Not to mention the fact that I would have had to advise our dear mother to take this step, although Julie and I had wanted to agree on the matter just amongst ourselves out of understandable consideration for her. In other words, we didn't want to tell her that we had already found another use for the money that she had promised me earlier.

So you have to recognize that I was able to write you with confidence at that time that you would receive money, and that I might have thought the time closer because the court case seemed to be going well, but I was not able to say anything with certainty. At about the same time the letter came in which you approached me with the idea of sending Ferdinand over to you. I have to confess that I liked the idea to the extent that

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prejudices here against births out of wedlock are so severe that it would have made his advancement difficult for the poor fellow and for me. Since she knew that I had already designated the 200 florins for you, my Zensi generously offered to pay for Ferdinand's travel with her money; it was to cost 400 florins, since I had to accompany him to Bremen. And he reached you; this I learn from you today, March 20, 1856. I told Roth in Bremen several times that he should advance his own money to you if he thought he could live together with you on your farm. That way Julie and I would not be under too much pressure to send money to you since, like I said, Wiedemann's case promised to take quite a while due to the appeal lodged by that scoundrel Josef Schwarzenfeld. I had just paid for Ferdinand's trip, and at the time it was impossible to borrow money even at the highest interest rates due to the negotiation of the enormous national debt, which has caused a terrible shortage of money to this day. And finally, as I wrote you already, I could not take advantage of my wife's assets once again.

During all of this worry I waited longingly for news about my Ferdinand; not a syllable, not a word. Fever and chills are a joke compared with uncertainty like that; finally I was to get news through a letter from Roth.

Your earlier relationship with Paul and Klenert is presented in such a way that, if only the half of it is true, we have to assume that you have become a completely different person. You're portrayed as a drinker; Klenert says that a while before Ferdinand's arrival you begged him in the strongest terms to shoot you etc. etc. And as yet not a single word from you that would disprove this disgrace. They even quote your words when Klenert asked you to think about what would happen to Ferdinand if he shot you. "What's it to me, if I'm dead. At last even yours truly will be dragged into this mudhole." Roth indicates that you said I could wait for an answer, since I'm arrogant or an ass—he just indicated it with A...\*

Your contemptible silence, when it was a sacred duty for you to report the arrival of my child, completely embittered 2 years for me, and if I could even halfway have managed to get hold of some money at that time, I would more likely have used it to bring my child back here than to send any of it to you. At the time you could very easily have assumed that unfavorable circumstances kept us from sending money, as was in reality the case. But you haven't the slightest excuse for your silence, which was so unnatural and heartless. And nobody has dared to step forward as your confidant. Because writing a letter, despite a fever, is not as difficult as getting hold of money in unfavorable circumstances like those I have described.

Since I can no longer live on my pension, I have taken work in the chancellery here in Prague, though it's quite difficult for me with my foot. I am glad to contribute 40 francs a year to the support of our dear mother, since it isn't possible for me to do more. I have lived together with wife and child as meagerly as possible as far as material things go, and I lived for 2 years spiritually in sorrow and worry about my poor boy's fate, and finally today I read not an apology for the neglect of brotherly duty, but instead reproaches for not sending money. I ask you candidly now, are you right or am I? Write

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to me; I want to read whether your vision is really so cloudy that you pass judgment blindly, as you did in your last letter, where you condemned without listening to me. So much toward a clarification of the situation and in my defense. Now to the matter at hand.

Roth writes at about the same time—just a few days earlier—that you still owe him the 140 dollars, and you write that you borrowed money at a high interest rate (25%) in order to pay him. Clear this up for me.

Since your survival and that of the child depends on the quick forwarding of the money, I will try to get hold of the money somewhere. Julie just wrote me that she can't send money with the best will in the world; Karl doesn't even come into question, since he has 6 children.

I hope to God that it will somehow be possible by your fixed deadline in June, but I hope for a quick answer. If you can imagine yourself in my situation impartially, your judgment of my behavior will change, and then I will extend the hand in reconciliation that you pushed aside; if not—then not.

Your sincere brother ???

Greet my child for me and for all of us, give him our blessing, and tell him that I think of him every hour and that my love for him is unchanged.

\*The literal translation of the German words is egotist/donkey (or ass).