My dearest son,

I do hope this letter finds you soon and that you are as well as can be. War is such a terrible thing, my son, I hope you never witness it again. Darkness is upon our land; it seems that every man that is alive is limping and that there are bloodstains on the dresses of all our women. Today I found the arm of a man lying at the side of a street. No body, just one arm. And I found myself asking trivial questions like, 'Is this an Ethiopian or an Eritrean arm?' Could you believe it? I was asking this question, I, the great Pan-Africanist. War is eating away at our souls, young man, it is terrible.

Sadly I must tell you that I have bad news. From the day I returned here I have been searching but I cannot find your mother. She left your auntie's house in Asmara to go visit your grandmother in Badme. Some people tell me she has been seen in Ethiopia, some say she is in Eritrea, but I have tried everywhere I can think of and I can't find her. When I came back I found that your auntie's house had been looted and burnt but your auntie got out in time. She is with your grandmother now. It has been very hard for me. I have hardly slept since I came back here. I did not want to give you such news but what can I do? You must know the truth, son. I can't find your mother. I ask myself what kind of a place do I live in if I can't find your mother, my wife and our love? But I can casually find the arm of someone I don't know just lying in the streets.

The organisation of EAST has fallen apart and now there is not a single organisation working for peace in the region. It seems that our people are so busy dealing with war that there is no time to deal in peace. Our Eritrean office has been raided and our Ethiopian office has been raided too. It is so sad that our only surviving branch is in London.

I hope you understand why we had to leave you in England for a while. I have so much work to do, and I will not stop until I find your mother. Be strong, young man. Learn more English and remember to love your neighbour. I will write you another letter soon.

Your loving father