

Ashtabula Ohio

June 4th 1862

Emma

I have just read your letter. Would God I never had! It has added tenfold to the bitterness in my heart. Oh! Emma, do not ever more reproach me for being cool! It sounds as if you meant unfeeling unloving. If you could have seen me for the past week or two you would not have thought thus! If I could have one thought of my Emma, if I could only dream of you as mine there would be some hope in life. And yet as you say I have been schooling myself for a long time to speak of it coolly and dispassionately and in a measure have accomplished my object. But Emma that fierce burning love which I have ever borne you is by no means extinguished it seems only to burn fiercer now that I ought to quench it! I know that death itself would be light in comparison with what

I now suffer and have suffered.

But I need not speak of it, I ought not to speak of it. If you wish to know if I can not teach you to bear your sorrow? You see how weak I am. Do you wonder that I cannot strengthen you? Do not ask me for support, Emma, I cannot give it.

But Emma it may be arranged otherwise, so as to afford me both a little hope and time and to regard it more calmly and habitually. How much would I not give if I might believe it unnecessary?

Let us leave the matter in abeyance for a time; let our correspondence be less frequent and let us both strive to be less wholly the other's. It may be that Our Father will render the sacrifice unnecessary, or will strengthen our hearts to bear it bravely.

It seems as though it must not, could not, be! How can the dream of my life be torn from my heart!

1862

Perhaps the dream has been too dear and fond to my heart. No Emma you are not alone in your sorrow, another heart bleeds as deeply as yours can. Still give me this prayer if not as before yet still give it me.

Albina

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