



Mrs Emma K. Towyer

No 227 West

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Sunday night

March 2^d 1879 -

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I wrote you a very bad letter last night or yesterday rather, but I would not send it for I knew it would pain you. I will send it with this, so that you may know how bad I was. I do not know why it is. I have not had any old ugly feeling before for so long until it came upon me yesterday and I was really angry at the thought of your being away. I don't know how it is but somehow I cannot reconcile myself to the thought of your being away or of my going away. It seems as if I must stay - as if we must stay - I cannot explain it. I am sure I wish to consult your happiness. I am sure I am willing to sacrifice for your joy, if necessary, but it does not seem to me that I can possibly promote it by going away. I do think that your view is the unhealthy and diseased one and ruins the true one. I do not blame you but I think you have brooded over fanciful sufferings until they have blinded your eyes to

solid advantages and what seems to me apparent necessity. It does not seem to me that God has opened or indicated any way out of this, to me. Neither prosperity nor honor, nor happiness seems to invite me to go. I cannot think, for instance, that I could go to Erie with any reasonable prospect of success. I do not think that I should feel - I have no feeling of distrust of myself, as I used to have, but somehow, I do not feel that I should be in a position to do myself any justice and I think you would have more cause of sorrow than you have ever yet known. I am almost afraid to say so, Darling. I am free to confess that I do not understand you. I cannot read you any longer. Since you came away from Raleigh, you have been a mystery to me. One thing I do know that love, the truest and purest and sweetest in the world has been the cause of your sorrow and the guide of your thought - I feel too that you have

been very near to a terrible fear and that I owe it to you to be controlled by your wishes. In this strait, I am very miserable. Not only the fact of uncertainty, but the fear that I may do what will cause you sorrow, gives me the keenest distress. I have prayed and waited and hoped for some unmistakable sign of God's will. I cannot feel any. Certainly, no door opens, no way is formed, for my feet to tread which is to explain us to enable any one to say with any decisioners, "there shall thou walk." So far as I can see, your wishes are about all the guide I have except the consideration of material facts. I think Greensboro is bound to improve rapidly and especially in this direction. If this place had not been rented I should think that the very best thing for us to do now, would be for you to come back, we buy Cecy's place on some considerable time, and say \$300 or \$400 - of building with now while everything is so cheap, and work out the

problem right here. I may be wrong
but somehow I can see light in no
other direction. I am only distressed
because it will not bring you joy. And
so I think we must wait, I can see no
other way, until there is more light
given us or until Time solves the problem.
I would not have written either of these
letters but I am afraid I cannot yet
the consent of my mind to come to
you. I cannot think that I ought to expend
what you and Lodie may need for your
comfort - Neither do I feel that I ought
to ask you to come back. Indeed, I do
not know but I should be doing wrong
if I did so. I feel that I do not comprehend
your feelings and motives - I have never
understood why you went - why you came
away from Raleigh or why you lost interest
in what I was engaged upon. I suppose it
was because you had lost confidence in me, faith
in my judgment and trust in my capacity,
and felt that you must act upon your own. I
am not at all surprised that such should
be the case. On the contrary, I freely admit
that you are entirely justified in such conclusion
but the fact itself, deprives me of the power of
decision - I feel that I cannot decide for us

Please do not grieve that I have written this. It has been a beautiful Spring day and I have been thinking of you all the day. I am afraid I have distressed you. It seems to be my fate to give you sorrow when I would gladly give you joy. - Kisses from John & Albin.

both, because I do not know your feeling and your thought. Acting upon my own judgment I may do you grievous wrong. Acting upon what I suppose to be your wishes and endeavoring to make the decision I may think you desire I may do even greater wrong to both - If I know any heart at all, I count your pleasure, your happiness more than any own past or future. I have never been greedy or ambitious but for your sake. For myself I have never wanted anything. I have wished to be rich and honored and great, that you might be happy and for myself, I have only desired to see your joy. That was the only gist and marrow of my life. I never dreamed of a possibility of life without that anticipation or hope, except as the most fearful of horrors. I have a thousand times blamed myself that I could not project Lodie into my life but I have never yet found any room for her. You have filled it. I know you have got the idea that I did not appreciate you, that I thought you could not do anything &c, &c. I do not know where it came from. I suppose I must have been inconsiderate in manner or something. I know that no such thought ever entered my brain until I was stunned with the recollection that it was in yours. However, it came there, I know that it was the offspring of your love and of my blindness or folly. You see - please see and believe Oh my Darling - that I do not

blame you - It is only the greatest of wonders to me, that you could have loved me at all or even been happy with one so unworthy of you. But all the same, this groping blindness which has so check me in and hidden you from me, prevents my deciding anything as to the future - your future - and mine as affecting it. - It was for this that I wished to see you before it became necessary to say or do any more. Yet I have dreaded to meet you, lest my hope that I might come nearer should be disappointed.

I can only wait and hope and trust. I know that God is good and I feel that he will be mindful of your happiness. We can only wait, I think. If it be His will that our lives should be united again on earth, He will show us the way. When or where, or how it shall be, I can not guess. All is dark. There seems to be no tomorrow. But I will not complain. I have had my chance for happiness and have thrown it away by weakness and folly and sowed the life which was more precious than mine by stupidity and blindness. I do not blame any one but myself. I know the past cannot be healed and only desire to give my life to make yours tolerable. I am willing to be here or there, with you or away from you, if I can but feel that you are happier because I am. Yet I have no key to unlock the future and determine how that result should be effected. If I can but be satisfied where that future lies, thither will I go with thankfulness and joy but until I can see the way, I think one had better learn things as they are and let the future shape itself -