

January 6, 1801

Plainfield (MA)

My Dear and Worthy Friend,

In this cold and distant clime I will once more address you. My pen shall once more faintly present the sensations of my heart. Oh! ! Had I the wings of a dove or could I mount on the swift wings of the wind and fly wherever my imagination would lead me how often should I find myself in your chamber attend you in your lonely hour in the silent nocturnal watches and in my disconsolate moments I would pour my soul into your friendly bosom but Oh, how vain to talk thus.

Fate seems to have determined that we shall seldom if ever meet again in this changeable state of existence. This favor however I hope will never be denied the favor of printing our ideas on paper. I have had no opportunity for conveying letters to you or even to a friend I have in Abington since my return to Plainfield til the present. I arrived at my native home after six days journey on Monday evening a week and a few hours from the time I parted with you. Was on the water one day and stayed in Boston one night which was Wednesday night. Went into the museum on Thursday morning where we were highly delighted with music and the images and figures around us.

Since my return as well as on my journey I have enjoyed a good degree of health and also my _____ and to hear the same from you would add to my happiness. Not a single word have I heard from you since we parted in Abington. I was not free from anxiety on your account, though. The evening but fondly hope that our constant presence would protect you from all harm and _____ you to your home.

My attachment to you my dearest girl, my sincere affection and constant regard can be realized by none but a feeling heart. In vain do I hear the reports which _____ by the envious and their false insinuations. In vain do the malevolent hurl their darts at your character. I say in vain do they do this in vain to me but to wound my heart I will maintain my sentiments of friendship amidst the boisterous ocean. This bosom shall ever shelter you my lovely girl from the bouts of envy and the slings of malevolence - here shall you find an asylum, here a friendly heart. Let me hear of your welfare every opportunity that domestic peace is still continued to you and every favor which you can claim as a child and friend in my constant hope. May heaven remove every cup of bitterness and affliction from your heart and commission peace and felicity to reign in your virtuous breast. May misfortunes no more be heaped on you but may uninterrupted happiness and prosperity be your future portion.

Your letter to Miss Clark I kept several weeks and could find no opportunity to convey it to her for

she had returned to Brooklyn. I therefore opened it and committed it to the flames according to your request. I had the pleasure to find in my _____ return your letter dated at September 12. Was pleased with its contents but sorry to find that you had ever been aggated or your feelings hurt by any apparent neglect of mine. To wound your heart is to wound my own my dear friend ____ every error and forgive whatever is amiss. I must conclude I have other letters to write. Ado my dear friend, ado your

L. R.