
Thursday Night
April 19, 1871

My Dear Son

This has been a sad day. I have just returned from poor Mrs. Means' burial and funeral and oh I never in all my life witnessed such a distressed inconsolable family. It is the first death they ever had in the family and they can't seem to realize it is a reality and oh it was so sudden. She was well at 4 o'clock in the evening on Tuesday and going about her duties as usual and got up from her sewing and told Maggie she felt like her foot was asleep and she would walk out in the yard and it would get the feeling in it directly, but she had not been out but a minute until she called Maggie and Mary, the black girl, and told them to help her in the house, she could not walk. They carried her in and laid her on the bed and went out and got some warm water to bathe her feet but by that time she had become numb all on one side. They got frightened then and blew the horn for Mr. Means and Horace who was on the back part of the farm, in the meantime Maggie saw Mr. Tompkins going along the road and she called him in to see her mother and he stayed until Mr. M and Horace came, and he went on as fast as he could to Ghent for the Dr. He met Puss and Gabe, they had been out to their Aunt's Mr. LL Tandy's he told them to ride fast, their mother was quite sick but when they got there she could not speak and was unconscious. Your Omy and I was in Ghent when Mr. Tompkins came and told us to take Dr. Ellis up with us in our rockaway. We went as fast as we could but when we got there she looked as though she was dying, did not notice or seem conscious of anything. I stayed all night, she died about 10 o'clock and oh it made my heart ache to see the poor children scream and beg the Drs. to save their Dear mother. Dr. Craig and Dr. Gains came about dark but they said there was no hope for her. They thought it was apoplexy. When Horace found his mother was dying, he swooned away and the Drs. thought at one time they never could bring him to but he revived at last – but every little while he would faint away. Your Pa and Uncle Abb and Uncle Lucian and all the neighbors was there. I sent over for Miss Cabie to come and help me to dress poor Mrs. M. Mrs. McClan was there but she stayed in the room with the children. I stayed till last night then I came home and slept and rested and your Pa went and sit up last night, came home at daylight and got a nap, and I went back soon this morning.

All the friends from Ghent was there yesterday, her funeral was preached at the Reformed Church today at 11 o'clock by Bother Keene and she was laid in the Masonic cemetery not far from your Dear little Sister. I stopped at Mr. Means and stayed with them till dark this evening and then Mariam went back to stay all night with them tonight. I told them I must come home and write to you – and poor Maggie said "Oh Mrs. G. tell Brooking my poor Ma thought so much of him. Tell him something for me." My son you must write to poor Horace and try to comfort him. He clung to me this evening when I left and said "Oh Mrs. G. I do love you so, you have been so kind to me and my poor motherless sisters. I will never cease to feel grateful to you." And they all begged me to come to see them often. They all seem to almost lose their minds. I will go to see them again tomorrow and as often as I can.

My Dear Son I will try and write to you again soon. You must excuse this letter if you can't read it. I feel so nervous and sad tonight. Your Pa says he will write to you soon. He is not at all well, has a bad cold and today has been windy and disagreeable. Write as

often as you can. I received your letter several days ago and was so glad to hear you were well and in good spirits and happy to see you stand so well in conduct in your reports.

Be a good boy my Dear Son. I feel it will not be long now until I see you if we are spared to live. Bud Louis says "tell Brother Brook he wants to see him." Your sister is not very well. Bud Albeard was married today.

Your loving Mother

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