



Syracuse May 25th 1861

Dear Friend Mary

Memory tells me I

made a promise to you, and as I like not
 to break my promises, I take my pen to
 tell you of your humble servant, This epistle
 is not to be wholly devoted to that, but you
 know our selves are wonderfully important
 when we write letters. Indeed, I should
 be dissatisfied to receive a letter from a friend
 who should write me nothing of herself in a
 particular manner, and therefore, perhaps,
 I am too much inclined to the egotistical
 side of the question. Be that as it may, I
 am glad to address you in this way while
 distance, intervenes between us; and we may
 not speak as we have spoken in the past.

You are happy, no doubt, in your home
 and home-friends, and now while the

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earth is budding and blossoming for our happiness and admiration. I know your heart is filled with pleasure, and grateful thoughts of the Giver of all this loveliness and glory. Truly, our God is better to us than we merit. He sends the smiling Spring with soft sunshine, showers and flowers, all the blessings of our lives, seemingly unmindful of our murmurings at his holy will, when it does not coincide with our own. Spring is my pet season, but here I am in the midst of the noise, dust and tumults of the city, nothing to remind me of spring-time, even when I go out to walk on some of the more rural streets, where I can see occasionally a tree in its verdant robes, and semi-occasionally a flower in the door yards, or at least, a dandelion lifting its yellow head from out the grass to be admired, I board on Salina St. where all the business and confusion concentrates, and so have the benefit of this as far as I am able to appreciate it. I look

out of the window where I sit writing, and see a long row of stores &c. five stories high, and that is all save the people passing. How would you like such a landscape to gaze at for months? I fancy you would prefer the one you have from your own door, which is highly picturesque and always beautiful, because more exactly the same. Notwithstanding these disadvantages I am decidedly pleased with my situation here. I am fortunately in a pleasant family who strive to make my stay with them happy as possible. My music teachers are very excellent and the advantages for gaining a musical education quite rare. The piano teacher is recently from Germany and teaches the German method, which is superior to any other. I shall be very anxious to come another time if possible.

Time has sped rapidly since I have been here, only leaving me locks of his golden hair as evidence that he has been across my path. I have tried to improve the "shining hours" but I never can feel quite satisfied with

myself in this respect, as I view the past in retrospection. If I say to myself I will this day improve each moment more to my satisfaction, I find many things at night, omitted which should have been done and many many things done which had better been undone. In thinking of this I can but thank God for his gift to fallen erring man, Glorious thought! that we may be forgiven through the intercession of Jesus Christ!

Now, how are you feeling about the war? I know you are interested for the safety of our glorious Union, and have possibly done various patriotic acts, such as making shirts and other comforts for the volunteers. Have any gone from Fern? Syracuse has been in the greatest state of excitement since I have been here until the departure of the Onondaga Regiment, when we had a little more quiet. Six young men have gone from the house where I board. Some of them are nearing the field of contest others are in Elmira. All the flags in the city (and they are numerous) are now at half mast on account of the death of Colonel Ellsworth, of the N. Y. Fire Zouaves, that is a sad thing. Such a noble man shot down for pulling down a flag which was treacherous to our government, I hope the rebels may be thoroughly subdued, and I believe they will. The right must be victorious, and we can but believe the right and a righteous God are on our side. If I were a man, I believe I should go and do what I could to keep the bright colors of our Flag from being trampled upon by Southern traitors. May our nationality be preserved is my prayer to our Father, and his blessing be upon the arms. I have now written you a long letter I might say more but forbear this time. You will answer soon, will you not?

Your true friend
 Mariaanna Bates