

Rebecca Gratz to Joseph Gratz

March 31, [1810]

No 4 _

Philadelphia March 31st.
Saturday night

Again My Dear Jo I chuse the period when your thoughts are turned homeward, to address you _ tho' I can only repeat how long the time appears since you left us. and how we continue to repeat to each other the loss we each feel in your absence _ Three weeks have you been tossing upon the waves! _ what would we not give to know how you bear it!? where you are _ and when you are likely to press terra firma again _ I have often wished for some of the fairy gifts bestowed on the personages of the Arabian fables _ but never with such good earnest as since your departure, for that magical mirror, which with a wish would reflect the condition of an absent friend _ tho' perhaps like the prince, I might sometimes see you in situations that would fill my heart with pain & apprehension _ It is weak to [lament] the imperfect command we have in this world _ perhaps were our wishes all gratified we should not enjoy half the good we now possess. and were we to apply ourselves more diligently to the correction of unreasonable expectations might arrive at the goal to which all our labour points _

We are told that you will have a delightful voyage the winds are favorable, the season fine, and the prospects prosperous. you have besides the prayers of the pious, [and] the good wishes of many gentle friends for [end of page]

your safety & success _ our Dear Father takes an extra glass of wine to drink your health in every Saturday. he is quite well _ and our sisters who were invalids when you left us are recovered. Fanny talks of making a journey to Baltimore in May. her eye gains strength, and she grows fat when the weather becomes settled she will go abroad again, and then will consider herself well _

I know you will be most anxious about domestic communication and therefore need not fear you will think a letter insipid which contains only a detail of such events as daily occur about the fire side of home, could I transport the amusing gambols of the children even they would be interesting to you _ for they would form a striking contrast to the scenes in which you are engaged _ and it will be a long time I fear before you will again have your head interested in such innocent play things _ but if you are debaced of this, you will have more important objects of attention, and I trust will derive as much pleasure as profit from your travels _ It is [probable] you will meet many old american friends in Europe, Charles Breck & John Myers talk of embarking this spring the latter is here on a visit _ and from letters received by the family

suppose you will find J. Moses at Hamburgh _

I remember your request about letters, and when in my power will comply _ at present the opportunities are so numerous and occur in such inconvenient numbers _ that all you recieve will be nearly the same
[end of page]

date and none worth more than merely to inform you of the health of your friends _ we are told to prepare three or four letters for different vessels _ and Alas! my dear Brother, you know how scantily our brains can furnish matter for many communications. shut up as we are from the news and nonsense that flutter about _ heralds of the day _ and are properly termed fashionable trifles _ yet these to one far distant, however worthless in themselves, are agreeable _ because they familiarize scenes you have left, and by a chain _ of associating ideas recall many pleasant images to the mind _ Thus a card of invitation from Made. DeDaschkoff for you, which stood some ten days on the mantle piece, was ever setting up a string of recollections _ of how innocent play [...] and enjoyed many similar fetes this winter; and [h...] [of your] [...] situation & feelings _ then the enquiry of what was that [...] and a long-shchain of conjectures all hidden in obscurity _ a sigh of uncertainty, and a prayer of trust in Him who rules the waves of the sea with equal power, that he directs the element we inhabit, closed the subject, until the next day brought our dear Jo again to our view, and thoughts _

All your friends & Relations from our dear Father, down in regular gradations send you love & best wishes our Brothers & Sally will write _ and if you are not tired of me, before the journal is begun you may expect some more sheets from her who is most truly your

Affectionate Sister RG _

[Address:]
Mr. Joseph Gratz
Hamburgh

[Endorsement:]
March 31. 1810