

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

March 2, 1812

I believe it is of a perverse and obstinate spirit, that the prophet complains when he declares, "they will not listen to the voice of the charmer, charm they never so wisely" _ Now My dear Friend, my danger is of giving too willing an ear to the charmer _ without examining whether the charm be really wise. or only sweet and alluring _ therefore as you value my humility pay me no more compliments. but let me hear from you frequently _ and believe me, the affection, which has for so many years heightend my pleasures & solaced my cares, will ever be cherished as a blessing _ You have ere this had the pleasure of seeing our Friend Rodman, he is much thinner. than we have been accustomed to see him _ but other ways not altered _ I felt very happy. yet very sad at seeing him. to meet an old friend who has been long absent, sets ones memory in motion, and so many sorrowful records have been made on mine, that I found my self continually retracing instead of enjoying the new pleasure of meeting one I have ever regarded with affection.

Rodman will tell you how well Ann looks, we spent an hour with her yesterday. I do not believe she will be shut up so soon as she says she will _ she is very active and never looked better _ little Matilda is almost a prodigy, she is a great beauty too _ Mary Seton appears to be a charming girl, but we cannot get her to our house and have seen her very seldom. she says she does not know the way alone & Ann never comes here _ Bella Ogden has promised to bring her to pass the day with us tomorrow _

Poor Mrs. Hopkinson has lost her son _ he suffered extremely _ and she with unremitting care watched by his pillow for three weeks. she is now ill her-self of fatigue and grief. Amelia Ewing is also "gone to her rest" _ I saw her not long before her death. her eyes were brightning into everlasting life, and seemed to obtain new lustre ere they closed on this world _ poor girl! since the loss of her sister Peggy she always appeared to me to languish. and yet she could not bear to think that she too should fall a victim to consumption. she did not realize to the last that, that was her disease _
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you have now in your city one of the most amiable, interesting & unfortunate young men, I ever knew _ S Myers of Norfolk he stays at Mr. Moses's _ and I wish if in your power, you would contrive to make Washington Irving acquainted with him, I am sure he would be pleased with him, he possesses a fine mind, highly cultivated, and an assemblage of those rare qualifications which enoble the human character. he is besides, unhappy. the melancholy circumstance which excited so much sympathy last summer, has completely [marred] [his] peace _ he will not go into any society in New York, but if he had such a companion as Washington or James P_ to brighten some of his solitary hours, I think, it would render his [exile] more agreeable. In May he will return home, and I hope after that period will be able to seek in some foreign country, the change, which is at present necessary to engage his attention _ I would have given him a letter to you, had I been sure you would like to recieve him as an intimate in your family _ but his feelings are so alive to neglect, that I was afraid to run the risk _ or to tax your friendship, in an instance where it might have been a sacrifice to your feelings _ tho' under other

circumstances _ I do not know any body I would more confidently recommend to your regards _

I am very happy to hear such accounts of Dear Eliza, she deserves to be happy. and I hope will continue to have her enjoyments encreasing as she advances _ when may we expect to have the pleasure of seeing her in Phila.? Mary Seton told me yesterday her sister was to accompany Eliza and that she looked for her in the course of ten days or a fortnight _ but as you mention nothing about it I have been doubtful _ I am glad you have heard from George, and hope he will make enough by his voyage to renumerate him for all the difficulties & dangers he has endured. I rejoice in the excellent promise, Ogden gives of future excellence, the surest evidence a youth can give of an amiable character is those domestic virtues which are unequivocal marks of correct feelings _ Marys affectionate attentions to you, quite [won] my heart last winter, and I have loved her ever since _
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I suppose Rodman will soon leave N York for Albany, he seems quite anxious to see little Eliza _ when you write to your husband present my love to him _ we have heard from Jo, but he will soon be out of reach of regular mails _ and then we shall feel his separation more severely _ Sally & Rachel bid me send you their affectionate love _ I intended to have written a long letter, but have been so often interrupted by visitors, that they have scattered all my thoughts _ and I will not detain you with any more prating _ my last interruption was from an agreeable young Dr. a nephew of John Randolphs _ who sat so long that he has only left me time to repeat, how happy your letters ever make me
and how truly I am your affectionate RG

[...] [all] your little darlings for me _ and do not let the dear [B...?] forget [...] you not bring them all to Philadelphia when the Spring advances _ and the roads are good[?] _ Adieu God Bless you! _

March 2nd. 1812 _

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