

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

March 24, 1822

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No indeed, My dear Maria, you were not my debtor, nor have been so for two or three months. but your kindness will keep me yours long after I have answered your letter. If you had not said you were interested in my employments I should be ashamed to plead the business of the Asylum, or any other as an extenuation of my neglect to you. tho' in fact a great deal of occupation has devolved on me in consequence of that unfortunate accident _ the Matron has had a severe illness too which obliged me to make a daily visit to her. and what with thanking great & small distant and present donors _ providing for the family and legislating about the new Asylum. I have not been a very companionable character, to any one above the rank of poor orphans and their concerns _ but indeed I have thought a great deal of you, reproached myself for not writing. deter-mined to do so, and for a day or two even thought of making you a visit. but as none of these projects came to any thing more than pleasant day dreams. they might as well have been untold _ My brother Hyman expected to have had business in New York ten days ago. and I prepared accompanying him _ however his call, depended on the arrival of a vessel from Gibraltar which did not come in season for me to leave home. and now if it does come, I cannot, as the Passover is at hand, we are expecting Jo too, whom it is probable you will see before I shall, in his last letters he [end of page]

speaks of the probability of coming in the April packet from England, if he can reach there in time for its sailing _

Dr. Chapman told me he had seen you, and tho' he did not give so favorable an account of your appearance, as I could desire he assured me you collect yourself well _ he thought Ann not the least changed, and Matilda a handsome young woman I have a longing desire to see you all, and while I had such a hope, anticipated it in my dreams, but they were such humid and unsatisfactory visits that I must petition Morpheus to mend or spare his favors _ I congratulate you on the revered youth & spirits of your husband ~~and~~ [more] on his return home, with such news of your Brother Verplanck I expected to hear [those] accounts of him when ever any thing was said _ his name occasionally meets my eye in the

papers, but I have not seen any of his speeches reported _
have you received any late accounts from W. Irving? _ when
Mr. Strickland left England, he was ill at Liverpool _ the
death of his brother & sister preyed on his spirits & had produced
a severe illness _ he told me Washingtons [reputation] was
wonderfully great & his Sketch book universally read &
admired _ perhaps his indisposition has protracted the pub-
-lication of his novel _ The Pirate is not as much admired
here, as the rest of Scotts works _ I am told Walsh likes the
Spy better, and he is considered orthodox by a class of
literati _ however I think the comparison unfavorable to our
countryman _ whose merit is high enough without elevating
him to such a dangerous eminence _ Ann has the re-
putation of being the translator of the Recluse, I think
you mentioned some other lady _ but as I did not know
[end of page]

whether she had not also amused herself in that way I
was not willing to contradict it _ if she has done it I shall
certainly read it, tho' the english abridgment having given
the story I have not looked for the other _

Will you have the goodness to tell Caty Ogden that
her shrubs shall be sent immediately and apologize
to her for their delay. I sent out for them as soon as your
letter arrived, & am ashamed to acknowledge it slipped my
memory. tho' I should not have forgotten them when I went into
the country _ When did you hear from your brothers in New
Orleans, is Edward married? one of the bad effects of my
laziness is the ignorance of all my friends situation which your
silence occasions _ is Eliza Rodman still in New York? and what
are her present prospects? _ has her fathers office produced [...] much [h...] expected _

When [shall] we meet again, My dear Maria, I believe it
is longer since we have met, than at any period of our
acquaintance. I hope the Spring or Summer will bring
us together some where _ might I chuse it should be here _
but at any rate we must meet _ present my affection
-ably to your husband & children _ to dear Ann & her
daughters _ Maria Nicholas, lost her only son, very suddenly
a fortnight ago, and is deeply affected by it, he was a fine
boy and his fathers pride, whose absence makes the trial
more severe to the Mother _ I have seen her very seldom this
winter, indeed since January my time has been so taken up with
business in the morning that I have made few visits _ and Hyman
having been altogether _ confined of an evening by rheumatism in his
head, I have declined invitations abroad _ and thus sunk again into
retirement. Adieu, dearest, believe me indeed incapable ever for a moment
to forget. or cease most ardently to love you _ must truly yr. friend RG_

[Address:]
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