

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

June 18, [1809]

Sunday Morning June 18th.

In my happiest days dear Maria, I used to consider it a happiness to spend Sunday Mornings in writing to you. and I now feel that this is an enjoyment no circumstance can diminish while you take an interest in my fate, Your charming letter I have perused with pride and delight _ the kindness & good sense it contains are not lost upon me, and I promise as far as is in our power to abide by your opinion _ we have indeed shut up our greatest Treasure The Portrait of our beloved Mother _ but we often visit it, to weep over features _ too deeply graven on our hearts to require even the painters skill to preserve _ when first we were deprived of this best of parents, I daily visited her picture, and felt that my only consolation was to gaze on it, but one day my father went in to the room and was so overcome by looking at it, that we determined to sacrifice our wishes of having it constantly before us, and close the room wherein it hangs _ considering it our first & most important duty to endeavour to cheer the gloomy despondency which this most fatal event produced on his already depressed mind _ the seclusion necessary to his situation _ [accorded?] likewise [with] our own feelings _ and we have passed nine melancholy months together. the wishes of our friends however is not unheeded by us _ and your entreaties my dear Girl, sink deeply in our hearts
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when our Sister is again restored to health _ and we permitted to return to our own parlour _ the shutters shall be unclosed _ we will learn from the benignity that beams on her countenance to imitate her most conspicuous virtue _ pious resignation to the will of God! and in the soft smile, which seems to compassionate our grief _ endeavour to find comfort _

your kind wishes for Sister Etting are very gratefully received she is still shut up, and suffers a good deal of pain, but her Eye gains strength, and tho' it continues to mend so slowly that we can scarcely perceive any change from day to day _ the Dr. assures us, that we have nothing to apprehend _ he does not encourage us to expect a speedy emancipation from the dull scene of darkness she has already endured for two months _ but I trust her sight will not be injured _ we strive to keep up her spirits by being constantly with her.

Hyman Moses has been quite ill too, for a week past. he is recovering tho' still confined to his bed _ which has given Rachel a great deal of anxiety & fatigue her little daughter is very lovely and in profile resembles you greatly _

