

Adams Gen Hospital
Memphis Tenn Jan 3rd

My very dear wife I will try and finish this letter now but I fear it will not be very interesting to you however I have done the best I could and now I have to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 24 which I have just read with one full page and in yours I found this miserable photograph that I should not have known had you not have said in your letter that it was taken and sent for a representation of your own sweet self and our dear Marshall. I return the miserable thing to you for I know you have not changed so much as to make such a miserable looking thing as that in the short time that I have been gone at least I know your face and hands have not turned black as they are represented to be in this picture "why dear wife instead of that loving gentle kind rosy cheeked wife I left a few weeks ago - for this thing represents some poor Norwegian about 40 years old" you will please tell the man that took that picture that I feel the utmost contempt in my bosom for him and that I think him a poor miserable contemptible swindler and not master of his art if this is the best he can do and would let you take such a poor thing from his shop knowing that you were going to send it to a husband that loves you and has been waiting so patiently for a true likeness" & feel so disappointed and vexed that I held him back I should give him a good sound thrashing as it is I would like to see him in the front ranks charging over a rebel battery midst a shower of shell and canister bad luck to him couldn't he see that handkerchief or some playin thing laying on top of your head I should think dear wife you might have felt that I hope dear wife you will not be vexed at me for returning it I would not give the old picture for 40 bushels of them I want something that looks like you or nothing if I could paint I have your image so impressed upon my heart that I could paint a true likeness though I am far from you you need not mind sending your pictures I will keep the old ones and I do not want you to pay out money that is scarce with you to such miserable thieving lousy scamps and contemptable trembling cowards who stay at home and scuttle the dear wives of soldiers out of money I am vexed and disappinted at present - but dear wife I do not blame you - I know how hard it is to go to town and I never yet seen a good true photograph of your hands and face had not been so black and that handkerchief had not been on your head I should have kept it though easier than it would not look like my darling wife & I am really glad my dear that the evil either is over and that this miserable snow is going off I would like if you could get that black walnut tree home before the sleighing goes off the weather here has been delightfull until this morning but now it is rainy and looks as though it may continue for some time "you say you dream I was at home to stay I wish your dream was reality as it is I can only long and wish for that happy time when I may clasp you to my heart and weep tears of joy at again beholding and kissing my dear wife alas blessed peace has been of obtained "oh how often I dream so sweetly of you and how I love to dream of our so dear - you say you gave John 30 dollars to pay Dr Woodard I really hope he has made no such exorbitant charges as that please let me know how much he did charge your card what he did for you - there has been a great movement of troops through this place and it thrills my heart and rouses my patriotism to the highest pitch to hear those splendid military bands playing at the head of column while whole brigades of the proudly keep step to the music as they go marching on to victory and to meet vily traitors and smite them to the earth It is a beautifull sight to see a well drilled army on the move to see the noble horse at the sound of music begin to prance and curve his neck as he carries his rider to death or victory dear wife my long tedious letter is about ended I hope you will wait patiently and trust in God for better days take all the pains you can with the boys and instill noble and right principles upon their young minds and teach them to be kind and generous and lavish to all and now may God bless you may he guide and comfort and assist you in all that is right Remember your loving Husband Wm D. Marshall

My Own Dear sweet wife

Yours of the 21 came to hand the 26 and I take my pen with great pleasure to thank you with my whole heart for the expressions of love therein expressed by you My Own beloved Wife for me I should have written an answer sooner to you but the very day I received yours I started a long letter to you and I did not want to tire you "Dear wife you need not trouble yourself to write to me twice a week" but write as often as you conveniently can and tell me you love me and cheer me up as your two last letters did and I will be satisfied for my heart is sad and heavy very often " for how can I be gay and happy and have a meny heart at all times when if I could but look around me I might see so much suffering and mortal misery " Then I am far away from you my dear and long to be with you so much for I feel that you want me then to provide and protect you " I am not unhappy my dear wife though often sad and my heart is bursting with sympathy for poor suffering humanity which I see every day and I can't release them " I will endeavor to describe the scene I witnessed and looked upon to day and which makes me sad and causes my heart to bleed at every pore with sympathy and pity " I have often spoken to you about the refugees that come inside of our lines more or less every day - chiefly women and children - while I was taking a run to day to enjoy the press we I - came to a large wooden shed that was used formerly for a cotton wheel house but lately had been used for a government stable = well inside of this shed were about 800 refugees women and children here they wear poor things with their gaunt and sickly looking faces without food or means to buy either no friends to provide for them many of them wear sick with no medical help and there was several corps in among them who had child and had not been taken away there was one poor woman who had been lyping the night before and her dead child lay by her side and she a dying for the want of care " my dear you can imagine what her sufferings are but I will not attempt to describe the scenes of total horror and misery I seen them " they lay crowded in the manure on the cold ground to without bedding food or clothing and nothing had been done for them yet and with very few to pity or sympathize with them oh how my heart bleeds for them I thought if they were only up in Bonn Germany how quickly relief would be furnished them out of your abundance - but here society is in such a disorganized state that everyone seems to think of now but themselves and they come and go to every place of amusement and enjoy themselves without a thought for the sufferings that are all around them on every hand dear wife this is one of the many scenes of sufferings that we are called upon to witness in this southern clime and one of the curses and miseries of unholiness how I would like to see the leaders of this wicked rebellion tortured upon the rack and be one of their tormentors " yes methinks the woes of these poor wretches will ascend up to heaven and call down the vengence of god upon their sin stoned souls " and they will be haunted through hell by the curse of widows and orphans made by their foul acts of treason now dear wife have I not reason to be sad and would I not be a cruel wretch if I could not feel and pity in such cases - but how thankful I am that you are so well off and in a land of sympathy and plenty and for poor those scenes of sufferings and woe oh God is good to me " this is a wicked place every night you can hear the shout of drunken revelry and in every saloon hell alley and corner you can look upon the drunken soldier and citizen who are indulging in debauchery and sin and ruining their mortal soul " then there is the various theatres and dances and other places of amusement crowded by the gay and thoughtless who do not seem to have a thought for any but themselves and I am often waked in the night by the report of fire arms as shots are exchanged between citizen and soldier and it is a common occurrence to hear of two or three bodies being found shot dead in the morning both of soldiers and citizen such is the state of society here in Memphis and you in your peaceful homes cannot relate realist or imagine the realities of the horrors by anything you can read nor can you appreciate the blessings of peace without living the realities of war " I see that our ladies in the different hospitals are going to start out with subscription lists and try and obtain means to relieve the sufferings of those poor wretches before mentioned and I feel that you will be willing for me to contribute \$100 dollars I know you want money bad but dear wife you can spare the amount as I have not spent money for any foolish purpose since I have been gone

and I know that God will not let you suffer for the amount I may give
for such charitable purposes - I wish that I had the means to spare
how happy I would be to go down in the morning and provide for
them - your dream that I was sick I can happy to inform you is
just contrary I am well and enjoying good health & and I am so
glad that my poorly composed letters are of so much interest to you that
you read them over so often - I shall endeavour to express my love and
feelings as well as I can in order to impress upon your mind how much
and how well I love you and how very dear to me you are - I imagine
my dear how very disagreeable it must be getting around on account of the snow
but I hope that you will not suffer in consequence - do not go out in
the cold more than you surely can help for fear of your health - I cannot
bear to hear that you are sick - I am so happy my dear to hear that the
little work I done while I have towards fixing up and trying to make
you comfortable has proved of so much benefit to you & wish I could
have done more but you you little ~~so~~ sickness kept telling me not
to work & leave my dear you were so unselfish that you wanted me
enjoy myself and visit you did not know how happy I was while I
was doing that work for you I knew I was doing something that would
do you good before him and I would like to be it done now to
break through the drifts & much want you with some more wool and keep
an good fire for you until this cold snap is over " and I am
amply rewarded for all I can do for you by knowing that it is all remem-
bered by you and that you in return are trying to make me
happy by being such a good wife - I think my dear if you can sell
the $\frac{1}{4}$ d for a thousand dollars you had better do it for the sake of being
out of debt but you need not be to anxious it is worth that and would
not be worth more - I think you had better seed down about
10 acres near the rye is or was 10 or 15 acres with grass timothy
if clover is so high the land wants rest and you had better
have a place to seed down every spring and a place to break up as
soon as you get started - I have answered your letter and
will now go to bed and finish this long letter the next chance I
so good night dear wife I shall soon be on my knees praying for
you before I go to bed may God bless and keep you and make
you happy in his love - I will take my pen to
write a few more lines of my unfinished letter I am very busy or am
called upon so often that it is almost useless for me to begin to write
it is nearly or quiet 3 months since I took my last departure from our much
loved home & and although an witness many strange sights & and there is
much here in the discharge of my duties and daily transactions to engage
my thoughts yet I assure upon my dear wife that I enjoy many a
good recollection of your affectionate kindness and unselfish and devoted
love - I am glad to inform you my dear that all is well with
me though I am so lonely and sad sometimes & I do my duty willingly
and cheerfully & and by so doing have won the good will of those
under me and the confidence of my superiors - yes dear I have made
some very good friends and all treat me with respect & for which I am
thankful to God and would give him all the glory - Let this cheer you
my dear during my absence & I never imagined until I tried what
a pain it was to leave her I love so dearly and so well & but alas I
know now that we cannot properly estimate our individual blessings
until we are denied them - my absence has taught me " that
deprived of you the world would be a barren wilderness and life a
blank " I love to meditate and think here in solitude & the many
 joys and happy seasons you have caused me strewn my pathway
 with flowers and exalting my soul to a just realisation of a being with and
 of the influence of your pure and gentle spirit over my rough nature
 Oh that we may be long spared for each other - to assist each other to tread
 life's decay pathway and at last land our souls in heaven
 a few pale months and I hope to be with you if spared to take my
stand again by your side as your protector and guide and
 in the meantime dear wife be assured of your health and of the
 children and be patient trusting in him who holds the
 destinies of all men for his almighty hands - the thoughts
 that I am remembered and fondly loved by you makes
 me cheerful and happy knowing that you will welcome my
 return and receive me with open arms & whenever I am
 going about my duties my mind often wanders back to
 you and I get to thinking of your many acts of kindness
 and thoughtful love for me then it is that I am

Oftimes forced by my feelings to bette betray my weakness
by writing those sad letters to you " with you will make allowance
for my dear wife " I have much to be thankfull for God is good
I am blessed with health and a clear conscience & and many
dear kind friends - and it is my sincere prayr to god that he
will assist me in the discharge of my duties close me from all
sin and increase my love to my fellow beings and help me to
upright and just so that I may not bring dis grace upon myself
or family by any wrong act or misdeemeanor and I can truly say dear
wife that since I have been gone I have brought no one ~~harmfully~~
but have cultivated the peace and good will of every one endeavouring to
school my heart to look with pity and compassion upon the failings
of others and to extend to all sick or well friend or foe that advice
that counsel and that assistance which I thought would render them
wiser and better thus dear Elizabeth is the life I am stricken with the
help of god to live and my own conscience tells me I am right
& fear my dear that this shall not be very interesting to you but
as I am destitute of any news and you have not complained
of my letters being to long I must write something you know
I have sent you several magazines and will send you some
more please mention in your next whether you have received
any of them or not " I expect to receive 26 dollars pay soon as
I have signed the pay rolls I will send you 20 as soon as I get it
I will now have to put up my writing again as Mary and Maggie
want me to go down to the boat with them to see Miss Powell off
who has been one of our nurses and is now going to start for one
of the hospitals in Louisville I am sorry to part with her she was
such a good woman " when you write let me know something
about your brother Thornton I have not heard anything concerning
him for a long time Good night dear wife & shall finish
sometime

Dec 2 My Good kind and Sweet wife
I again take my pen to write a few more lines of this long letter
I have not anything of any importance to write and I scarcely know
what I am going to fill up this letter with - Well Arthur and
my sweet belonging to the 9th regt in to see me day before yesterday
yesterday is as rough as ever they urged me to go out in town with
them and I had to do some tall playing off to get rid of them
I was glad to see them they look real well - yesterday my
good friend Arthur was in to see me and I spent
the afternoon with him he is looking fristrate and is a brave
soldier we wandered all over the town and had a long
talk in the park he has been in a great many fights since
I last seen him and has had some hair breadth escapes
his regiment will be in town on monday they are going down the
river to Pittsburgh - he thinks a great deal of our family he
and I are very warm friends he gave me \$5.0 dollars of his money
to keep for him which I will express to you as soon as I get
handed so that I can send my darling wife my wages with it
my good sweet dear noble wife I wish I could send you a big
pile but dear my wages are small and dont amount to
much but oh how chearfully I send the little pile to you
knowing that you will think just as much of me as if I
sent you thousands God bless you Elizabeth how do you
and oh if I could only make you feel the power of my
love for you Arthur would have me go and sit with him
and have our pictures taken together for father so I went and
I never wanted to laugh so much in my life as I
did when the artist was taking them Arthur was so full
of mirth you will see as soon as you see the pictures
that I am just ready to roar " I held my head to high
to look all right I will send them to father soon you
must not tell him that they are coming Arthur thinks
so much of father and I know father will be pleased
with the pictures Arthur sends his love to you and says
you must not get dis cunaged this war will soon be
ended and we will soon be home " yes dear cheer up their
so better days coming " I will finish this as soon as I
receive me from you I am expecting one every day and may
want to answer some or any enquires you may make
so I will say good night again may God bless you a kiss