

October 3<sup>d</sup> 1828

My Dear Husband

I should like very much to speak my Heart to you in person, but I expect you shall have little patience for such inconsequential Matters, and I dare not disappoint you yet again. Therefore I put this pen to paper in hopes of somehow conquering my Demons. I know you shall not even read these words—I know you ~~will~~ will not, for I will never let you see them, even should you ever learn to read. I will lock them away in a Place you shall never go. I ought not even be writing now, but I daresay I find myself now in such a state of Helplessness of Spirit that I can only wish for such Solace as these words may, if I take care in writing them, afford me. I can think of no better thing to do. After you left, I removed your dinner from the Kitchen floor, and scrubbed the floor and walls. We lost only one piece of China. I replaced the Mirror on the Parlor Wall & am relieved it did not break. Still I wept in fear that you shall not be pleased. Then yet overcome with Anxiousness I walked the dewy Pasture for some time, and along the Hedges to the Pond. Three Crows appeared to follow in the trees with watchful interest yet I sensed in them no ill will; rather I gained from their attentiveness some measure of Comfort, and the exercise of walking did lift my Spirit. I waited by the Pond for I know not what Sign or Augury but none came. Upon my return, I drew water and let the Sheep into the Barn—I lit a lamp and sat there with them well past nightfall. As I sat in silence a little Mouse hurried out from a spot of hay and stood on its hind Legs in a position that resembled Prayer. To what God do Mice pray? To what Reward might they look forward when they quit this Vale of Tears? Now I have lit a Paper and sit in candlelight at the Table where echoes your rage. Now you and your Horse are away I know not where, nor do I know when you will return. I was a child, a Girl in her full Innocence, when we were wed. In the years since you have taught me much. And I do love you, I believe, if Love is what I am told it is, even in my Heart's confusion. For whatever reason I have not given you a child. Am I barren—I do not know. I know only that you are my Husband, whom I depend upon and care for and lie with, and yet I dissatisfy you to the point of Wrath.

Your truly attached W<sup>e</sup>  
Lydia