

Richmond, [Va.], 20 May [18]62

My D[ea]r Angela

Your letter of the 15 inst. came today; & why it requires five days to come here from Carington [Carrington] I can't comprehend. I am always the better for your letters; but my mind is so depressed by pressure upon me that their tone of complaint & distress saddens me greatly. Our naval reverses have deeply afflicted me.

The teaching of Attie [Attila Mallory] & Ruby will occupy your mind, & afford you an appropriate exercise for your patience. I think that the lessons taught him by his mother must remain longest with the boy; & I [desire?] that Ruby & Attie shall look back in after years with pleasure upon your efforts in this way.

Your patience will be tried, but the fulfilment [*sic*] of all sacred duties tries the patience.

Mr. Lifts & Senac came a day or two ago. Senac is a little sick, but is about, & will leave for Vicksburg day after tomorrow.

[Hannah?] came to the Dept. yesterday to enquire of me the best way to get to Key West. I could not talk to her at the time, & she came & dined with me today, & talked over the matter. I knew of no way of course & told her so. She is today at Mrs. Watson's.

Our army is now all around Richmond, just outside the city, & McClelland [George B. McClelland] is getting ready to attack it. We are to have a fight for its possession, and will not abandon it so long as it can be held. The State & city authorities & even the women of the city desire that it shall be shelled rather than surrendered.

Mrs. Davis [Varina Howell Davis] & children are in Raleigh, Mrs. Johnston [Lydia McLane Johnston] is still at the Spotswood. Lizzie Myers has gone to Marietta, & hundreds of families have left Richmond.

God bless you my beloved wife. My affection for you is today the sole bright spot of my life.

S. R. M.

Transcribed by Nicole J. Milano, University of Florida, 2009