

Chestnut Hill – Philadelphia, Pa.
Sept 9 1884

My dear dear Effie

How wonderful it all seems. I cannot sleep a wink tho' it is now even on toward one o'clock & I have had to try & find some relief from my thoughts. I have stolen away from Mr. Doteener with whom I am staying & come into his study on the plea that I will write a letter & get sleepy. I shall write the letter & whether I shall get sleepy or not shall depend upon future conditions that I do not know as yet. I dont think that I should have such an attack if we could have found out that we loved each other in any ordinary way & then had time to settle down & talk the things out in the normal fashion. But to have my joy come all so sudden & to have it so utterly impossible to say a thing one wanted to & to feel that when we had just come to know each other after so long an acquaintance & then to be forced to drop every thing & run away at the rate of almost a mile a minute it was too bad. I never lived so much happiness in ten or fifteen minutes before. To find that you felt the same when I expected fully that you would look pained & sorry & tell me that it was hopeless O my darling it was too much. You have no idea how I watched your face as the thing began to dawn upon you & I felt sure for an age that you were not only surprised but hurt that I had gone so far & then I imagined that you would wind up all our happy happy friendship. I didn't dare to dream that I should get any thing more than a promise that you wouldn't engage yourself to anyone else until you had had a chance to find out whether you didn't or couldn't really love me. But oh Effie to find that you did it was too much. I never felt so weak & broken up in my life. It was too sudden[,] too unexpected[,] too great a happiness. Dont think it silly to say this but I can believe I can almost imagine what fainting for joy must be like. The ride to Philadelphia was a dream for I was by myself for two hours & had your face floating in front of me just as it looked when it began to dawn upon me that you weren't going to utterly crush me. That two hours gave me time to think it over & feel it over again. O Effie think of it nine whole months before I shall see you. What a trial! But how glad I am to have a certainty to look forward to & not a doubt which eats into one's soul & gives him no rest at all. What have you done? No doubt you went home & how you astonished your mamma! No I dont believe you astonished her. Mothers are sagacious & I think she may have made a shrewd guess — Dear cousin Em[,] I wonder if she is blaming me for disturbing her little nest & stealing away one of the birds. I didn't mean to do it — five years ago I should have smiled at anyone who foretold this but a year ago I should have been inclined to believe him. I dont think that we fooled our parents as thoroughly as we unconsciously did one another for mamma told me this morning as I left home that things would be settled before I left for New York today. I think she said it more to draw me out & pump me than because she believed it at all. I didn't say anything then for I felt so sure of refusal that I didn't want to be beaten & then have it all go out. I think that she will be surprised too when she finds out. O if I could only see you for a single hour. You blessed girl I shall never cease blessing the lack of shoes that drove you down town or if it was not really true, the impulse sent from heaven. Whatever it was that led you to go with me to the ferry — I was just crazy to unveil all day but some how it seemed as that would be so fearful & sudden but going down town as we neared the end I felt that I just couldn't go away with that thing in doubt. And now O my darling I have found you out. It is always best to make a clean breast of every thing isn't it. Do

you want to know the only straw that I have had to cling to ever. I may say that you have acted wonderfully. I think much better than I for it seemed to me that my thoughts must show out to you. Well the straw it is this. On the Sunday when we were on the hill & you were lying in the hammock I told you once you know that I tho't you weren't playing attention to what we were reading & you admitted that you were not. At that time you had your face covered with the hammock & I tho't I saw you looking at me & when I accused you of inattention I thought that for the instant you were slightly confused as this caught at something. On that little chance I have founded more air castles during the last days than there are houses in New York & yet it may have been & no doubt was fairly imaginary on my part. I said that your visit to Baltimore was one of the first glimpses I got of my own true feelings. The thought that I should see you in Baltimore & having you there with me showed me that my regard for you was not an ordinary friendship at all. And I have felt ever since like a sort of sneak coming to your house & seeing you & feeling just about crazy to have you in my arms & tell you all & yet never to say a word about it to you. But I felt it was not fair to you to attempt to bind you to a poor biologist, & then I could scarcely feel sure that it was love[,] true everlasting love at first. But this last separation was the worst I ever passed through when I had no letters from you for several weeks & then heard that you had had a paralytic stroke. I was completely broken up. I hope I shall never go through such another nine months as the first half of this year was. I was half frantic in worrying over my degree for I was honestly very much scared lest I should be plucked & then I was never at rest about our affairs. I am afraid that my feelings influenced my letters some of them a little. What I wrote about the ~~music~~ voice in the street was more to me as I wrote it a picture of the heaven it would be if you were only here or I were only with you. I think I shall be tolerably happy next year because tho' we shan't be able to clasp hands physically we can write & think & hope & O Effie dear there is a world of comfort to be gotten out of a hope particularly when it has good foundation. I meant to have asked you to write to me at once or rather I have since wished that I had done so & then I should have your letter about as soon as I get to Purdue. Maybe you have written to me tonight or will tomorrow. I presume that you will not fall asleep the instant you have touched the pillow any more than I have. I shall write you a long letter on Sunday & perhaps before then if you can stand it. I found Professor Barnes when I got in at Philadelphia. He is a young looking man[,] twenty eight yeas old I imagine[,] rather tall & ~~thin~~ slim with light hair & sandy mustache & sides. He is very pleasant & agreeable & I am sure that he & I shall like each other very much. I am glad that he is so for I think he will be a great companion for me. He tells me lots about the place out there & I feel more & more sure that I was wise in accepting the offer there. Lafayette is a place of twelve thousand people[,] has several thriving churches[,] a fine opera house[,] pleasant people[,] is on the banks of the Wabash River. Purdue Univ. is across the river on the outskirts of Chauncey[,] a village of fifteen hundred people or so. But I wont try to tell you much about it now for I shall be able to give you a much fuller account as soon as I get there & I feel sure that you will be interested in every detail wont you? You have no doubt before this thanked God upon your knees for this great happiness of ours. I prayed to the Father sometime last week about this and the meditation seemed to leave my mind the clearer & I felt sure that I should be right to tell you of my love — Let us thank Him together for this new light & pray him that we may have his guidance & direction during the time we must [~~ill~~] dwell apart & after we are united so that we may be all to one another[,] that we may bring each other a [ill.]. And now

goodnight my darling Effie. (I cant get tired of repeating that name over & over. Dont think me foolish.) I am no more sleepy than when I began. Pray do write to me very soon. With dearest love Harry —