

Frank James to Anna Ralston James

s.l., 15 August, 1882.

Autograph letter signed, 4 pages.

August 15th 1882

My Precious Ones..

I wrote to you on the 11th. was mad and have but a faint recollection of what I said. I have been sick ever since about this time last summer was effected just as I am now. I suppose you want to know what I am doing. Spending the most of my time alone scarcely ever see any one when I do only for a few moments at a time. Sometimes 'tis sweet to wander to rude solitude where naught but heaven can hear us holding converse with the sad heart. But let me say to you 'ive had enough of it. Now I long and sigh to be with my dear "little family." I am growing so tired of this lonely life nature is almost exhausted and it will be impossible for me to endure it much longer. I do nothing but sit here day after day and think and wonder what will be the result and like "Timon of Athens" my only companions are the dear little birds by day and boding "Screech Owl" by night – with his horrid cry (I always think of Ma when I hear it.) While you are with dear parents and kind friends I thank God that you are in sprit – I too am with you, always will be. Wish I was with you in person. I do love you more [2] than all else on earth. You possess all the endearing qualities of a beautiful and loving wife. Whereas the majority of women in this world are clever in smiles and born proud of equipage and dress well versed in falsehoods looks and vows deceitful smiles and bland caresses. Not so with my dearest one. When you tell me a thing I believe it no matter what all the world may say my faith and good opinion of you can never be shaken. And were it Fifty million offered for my capture I should have no more fears of you than if it were one dollar. You are with me as Cesar said his wife should be. That is beyond any suspicion. Why I talk this way I know from what you tell me that some one has intimated that you might give me away. No doubt there are those who profess to be our friends that would only be too glad to have you do something that would cause me to loose confidence in you. Simply for them to have the pleasure of saying, "I told you so." It has been well said that gratitude is the most beautiful of all the human virtues. If this be so

then I thank our Heavenly Father, For he alone knows how grateful I am [3] to you for all you have done for me. For what you are doing now. Did I not appreciate you I should feel as I was a disgrace to humanity and should ~~and she~~ be universally and deservedly detested as the most ungrateful being that ever lived. I stand upon my honor as much so as any man I care not who he is. I have never proved requeant any trust. God being my helper never will any man who does I think cannot be loaded too heavy with infamy and dishonor. Darling we have had much to
with
was
contend ^ since we were married notwithstanding I never knew what real happiness ^ 'til since you have been mine No doubt we may in the future have many things thrown in our way to impede our onward march to victory. No matter let us press on with the work began. "Shrink thou not if thou canst lighten one ray of hope to hopelessness afford. With Heavens rich promises one dark mind brighten. Lead one unhappy mind back to God." Why go on never cease until we triumph in the bright "Lexicon of fame" let there be no such word as fail. If we listen to others and were as despondent as some we would be sure to fail. But you and myself have always been hopeful every thing His Excellency has said in regard to us has been favorable to our cause. The door of State has been opened for us and I believe Gov. Crittenden means to do something for us. I will not believe otherwise 'til we have it from him direct that he will do no more. I sometimes think if I could see him it would [4] be best. I do not think him so mean as some would have us believe. His Excellency perhaps was the only conspirator who had the name of justice and honour for his motive in doing what he did. The rest were wholly actuated by the hope of being remanded in a pecuniary way and today if Crittenden would express his honest opinion in regard to the Fords. I am satisfied in my own mind that he would say there is not in all dark seated hell two such vile and loathsome wretches. A man with his teaching could not think otherwise, I have had some of my friend my friend to say to me don't you think the Gov. will have you killed if you meet him." I say to you that if the Gov. tells you or our friend he will meet me in good faith to discuss our interest I will do so without any fear of treachery whatever. You know I have always tried to take an impartial view of every thing and because a few have acted badly is this sufficient reason for condemning every one. Why certainly not. The only safe plan is to render unto Cesar the things that are his and unto God the things that are His. Darling am getting

us

anxious to anxious of course and you know the Bible tells ^ to “Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him &c.” But I suppose as you say we will have to await their pleasures. I don’t know when I will write again [*at top of page 1*] if you do not hear from me in a year know that I am always thinking of you Robie and will love you on to end devotedly.
AFJ

[*note sectioned off at top of page 1:*]

Rob! i Had crow for dinner to day but don’t “hanker after it.”

J.E.W.