

No. 54 West 46th St.
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My dearest Harry

I dont know what time the Sunday mails are taken up, but I am in hopes that the letter I mailed today will reach you on Tuesday Morning or Tuesday afternoon at the latest, tho' I dont feel sure that you will get it before Wednesday. I meant to have it reach you on Monday but couldn't write till last evening. I explained why, in the letter. I wrote you a long letter in the morning but you wont read that till Wednesday Evening. I had to put that in the box I sent you, and didn't have time to write any regular letter in time to have it go out last evening. I felt sorry but I couldn't do any better. You'll have this on Wed. morning and perhaps the one I sent today will not reach you till then. On Wed. Eve you will have several sheets, for in the box you will find a little note which will kill considerable time for you, and on Thursday Morning you will receive a note or letter from me. I will surely write something ~~on~~ tomorrow evening so that you'll get it Xmas morning. It may not be a long letter for I expect to be rushed to death the next few days. I dont know how I am going to get thro' with all I have to do. It frightens me to think of it, but I'll make time, to write you some word to mail Tuesday A.M. so that you'll have some thing on Thurs. A.M. If you dont receive a package from Mamma in the morning mail you had better meander over to the Express office, and see if any thing is to be found addressed to Dr. H.L. Osborn. I dont know whether mamma will send her package by mail or express, but it will be sent tomorrow by something. I wish she'd put a tag on me, & send me by express to spend the day with you, and you could send be back by the return delivery, but I guess I'll have to stay home & finish up my work. I haven't time to waste lying around express cars, & express offices. I have left things till the last minute, because it has seemed impossible for me to find time to finish them before, & now they have got to be done, and I'll have to stay home and finish them. I am not doing much for Xmas, & yet I find my time crow[d]ed just now. I have a piece of outline work to finish, and two plush handkerchief cases to make, & a few little things to buy. Tomorrow I have three lessons, and Tuesday my Orange trip & Jennie Gano's lesson after I return, and on Wed. I have got my Thurs. lessons to give, because they wanted to have their lessons, and wanted Wed. instead of Friday, so I'll have three on Wednesday. I'll have lively work getting my things finished. The outline work and one hank. case must be finished before I go to bed on Tuesday night. As I have some others things to do tomorrow morning, I'll have only my evenings to work in, and I'll have to sit up the greater part of the next three nights. I had to buy presents for mamma[,] Jule & Lottie for I found that I wouldn't have time to make anything for them. I got a plush album for Cabinet photos, for mamma, and some handsome handkerchiefs for Jule & Lottie, so that has helped me out of considerable work, and I guess I'll get thro' with what I have on hand. I really dread Xmas day. I suppose we'll both have the blues in spite of ourselves. We will be thankful for what we have, but we cant help longing ~~f~~ to be together, and I know in spirit we'll be together every minute of the day, but that isn't just what we want, but perhaps you'll be able to get some comfort out of it. You will know, no matter what moment you think of me, I am thinking of you & wishing for you. You wont be able to catch me "off guard" once. It is kind of poor comfort isn't it, and yet it will be something to know that you are remembered all the time, and in spirit I'll be nearer you than I am to those around me. Now my own dear Harry I feel guilty because I have not answered your letter of last Sunday. It is impossible for me to send an answer worthy of it, but you understand

how it has been. On Wed. I couldn't do it, for it was all I could struggle to write thro' the scrap I did write. On Thurs. I was sick again, but I wanted to tell you about your mother's call, and how pleasant she was, and to show you that she was better than you tho't, & that I believed you had not understood her letter, that I tho't she had meant it to be kind & loving. I tho't you'd be glad to feel that things were not as bad as you had feared. Then I meant to end the letter better and ans. your's of Sunday, but I couldn't, and so it has been all week, and I have never been able to do the subject justice. I hate to say "I forgive you," for that is the same as saying that I think the fault has been all on your side, & that isn't the way I feel about it at all. I ought to have known better than to imagine things as I did, and I am as much as blame for my terrible week as you. We were both to blame, & You started the trouble, and after that I was just as bad as you were, worse perhaps for in spite of my confidence & trust in you, I showed very little when I understood your letter as I did. I ought to have known that you didn't mean what I tho't you did, or feared you did, but I was simply wild. I account for my part in this way. Your love for me seems wonderful to me, and too good to be true. I cant see what there is in me to call forth such love from you, and when Sue's letter came it made me fairly crazy, but I got over that entirely I tho't, but you see I couldn't forget it, even tho' I forgave it, and when you wrote as you did I could only see it all in one way, and then I th'ot of Sue's letter and tho't that perhaps you had begun to see your mistake, but I put that tho't away as unfair to you, but I could not seem to get over the idea that you felt all this without realizing at all, but I tho't you would sometime find out that I was not all you had ~~imagin~~ imagined. And since I have had this uncontrollable fit and misunderstood you so, I can have more sympathy for your attacks. Forgive you? You know I forgive you fully for what you unconsciously did. Can you forgive me for misunderstanding you so? Well my own Harry we are all right now. But you must not feel as you do about it, that I have shamed you by my unselfishness etc etc. Why Harry you are surely a deluded man. ~~Why~~ I never before was accused of being unselfish, and you are all "off" there. Either "love is very blind" in this case or else you made a slip in writing, & put unselfish by mistake, and meant selfish. I wont suspect you of meaning it as sarcasm, for I know you never tho't of such a thing, but dont imagine I am unselfish, for you'll find out your mistake if you do, for I am the very opposite. Well I'm glad you think ~~us~~ I am unselfish and hope you'll never find ~~it~~ me out, but it so plain a fault that you are sure to see it before long. Oh Harry you ask if I remember all the old times. Indeed I do. How could I forget them? You also ask ~~af~~ about that day on the hill when I didn't hear what you were reading about. I was too busy with my thoughts to listen to what you were reading, in "Musical Memories." I have told you what I was thinking about I am sure, in some of my first letters. I dont know how I looked, but I know how I felt, and you upset me completely when you brought me to by asking some questions about the book, and I found I was caught. I saw there was no use trying to squirm out of it, and so I had to own that I hadn't been listening. You were so determined, and so provoking, that afternoon. I wanted to get in a position so you couldn't see my face, for you kept staring at me, and it made me uncomfortable. That afternoon I was in one of my worst fits and was in terror lest you should discover my feelings. I didn't dread your knowing, if it was done in the proper way but I didn't want to give my self away, without ~~being~~ first hearing your side of the story. I was afraid to trust myself that day, and you did act dreadfully. You would insist on sitting directly in front of me, and torturing me, and I was so mortified when you caught me. I tried to keep that big hat ~~of~~ over my face, & my umbrella up as a protection from the sun (I told you)

but you bothered me more than the sun did, and I wanted it as a screen to be let down between us, but you even were mean enough to spoil that little scheme. Oh you were very very bad that afternoon and I couldn't manage you at all. It wasn't fair for you to stare at me so. Of course it made me more & more upset. You know enough about that afternoon, and I am now going to pay you up for teasing & worrying me so that afternoon by making you wait indefinitely for any further account of it all. Did I guess right about the feeling there was when we took our Newburgh trip, or did I only imagine some thing? I felt uncomfortable enough and cant think that I only imagined Sue was displeased with us both. When she was with you, she seemed to be giving you a terrible dose of scolding about some thing. Of course I dont know about it but it looked so, and I couldn't help feeling that it had something to do with me. I suppose we did act very badly, & showed such a preference for each other's society that we made them feel uncomfortable, and mad as well, because we didn't seem natural to them. I suppose it all made it seem harder to Sue when she heard that we were engaged, and that is one reason she was so cut up about it. But I guess they are beginning to get used to it, and that we will have no more complications. The weather has been intensely cold the last two days, and today it has been snowing, but it has turned to rain now and tomorrow the streets will be in a frightful condition. I think a steady cold is much less trying than these sudden changes. You are having a cold time. The thermometer dropped below zero here, but your story is better about it than mine, for we didn't have it 10 below. But you haven't frightened me with all those terrible ~~accounts~~ accounts of cold, for I think it will be easier to stand it when it is a steady cold than to get used to the sudden changes here. Besides I am warm blooded, and dont feel the cold as many do. My hands and feet & ears & nose bother me, but I'm not afraid of your cold climate. There has been nothing of importance going on here. We have all been too busy with Xmas work to think of other things. I wanted to go to the opera ~~to~~ yesterday but found I couldn't spare the time. Yesterday morning I had an invitation to a Concert at Steinway Hall, but had to decline. It wasn't a Philharmonic, or anything like that, I am thankful to say, or I would have been all broken up. I think they are going to give Tannhäuser next Saturday, and that I must hear again, and then perhaps I'll have more to tell you about it, and I'll send my Libretto to you. I meant to have done it before but I had let some one take it to read when you sent for it, and after it was returned it was mislaid, but I'll send you one next time I hear the opera. I'll let Sue know about it so that she can go if she cares to. Jule seems to be about well again, and I am entirely over my attack of last week. I haven't heard Nevada yet, I want to hear her, & yet the operas at the Metropolitan are given so much better, that I always find that opera house has the greater attraction for me. I get so much more good out of the operas there, and the orchestral part is so far superior to the one at the Academy (tho' the Arditi isn't bad by any means) that I always choose it. I dont know whether I told you about the reasonable prices. I can have a reserved seat for .50 if I go way up to the top gallery, and the music sounds better there than in any other part of the house, and if I get in the center or the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd rows I am better satisfied than to be down stairs. The day I heard Don Giovanni Minnie Zerfass went with me (Dutch treat) and we had elegant seats it the center on the second row, (I wont take a seat further back ~~than~~ than the 3rd or fourth row.) A very elegantly dressed lady sat next to me. She was alone and we struck up an acquaintance (not a calling acquaintance but a temporary one). She was perfectly charming. Had A wonderfully interesting face, not pretty, but remarkably fine looking, and about thirty five or so I should

think When we went in, the programmes hadn't arrived, and after a little I went out to try and find one, and after quite a search I got two, and came back feeling pretty smart, for ever so many had gone for them and couldn't find them, & were told there were none. I was going way down stairs if necessary for I was bound I'd have one, & as I was passing thro' a little waiting room on my way to the stairs I happened to spy eight or ten, under a chair and I quietly took possession of two and marched back. This lady asked me "where I got them at" or words to that effect, and said she had been out two or three times but couldn't get any (half the time there are none to be had up there, and they are always scarce & if one doesn't look out the day will prove "chilly". I have had so much experience like that, I have learned wisdom by it, and now I am on the rampage for a programme as soon as I get in, and lately I seldom get "left." I told this lady where I found them, but told her that it wouldn't be worth while for her to go out for they would probably be gone before she could get there, and I gave her one of mine and told her that we could get along with one, & she was welcome to it, for she at first didn't want to take it because she tho't there were two of us, but when I got off this elaborate speech, she accepted it. Well Minnie and I got to talking about some musical matters, & she suddenly struck in, and we became very friendly. She turned out to be a great lover of music, & has seen & heard about every decent opera there is, has heard Nilsson in e every part she takes, and she told me lots about different operas, and about opera's in N.Y. ten years ago, the great improvement in the setting etc. It was a very lucky think all around for she seemed to enjoy us quite as much as we did her, and the time between the acts was spent delightfully. She insisted on my using her opera glasses and was altogether charming. She goes every Saturday and says she never goes down stairs any more, that she has tried seats in all parts of the house and likes it up stairs so much better. You'll think I'm more enthusiastic over her than I am over the opera. Well I'm not enthusiastic over the opera. It was beautifully set, but I was terribly disappointed in the music. I like it less than any opera I ever heard. Mrs. or Miss ___ is as crazy about Tannhauser & Lohengrin as I am and we enjoyed comparing notes. I hope to meet her & sit near her again some Saturday. It was a case of mutual admiration, for she seemed to enjoy it as much as I and when it was over did not leave us till we reached the street. I felt as well acquainted with her as could be and it will always be pleasant to think of her. Her face fascinated me before we spoke.

I have got to [!!!] stop now dearest.

With more love than I can ever measure
ever & always your own
Effie.

Mamma & Jule send love.