

No. 54 West 46th St.
N.Y. Dec. 31st 1884

My dearest dearest Harry,

Well here I am again. I hope you didn't count on escaping a dose so soon again. "A bad penny always turned up" & you might have known I would not let you off so easy. Of course we know that "all signs fail in a drought" but we are not having a drought just at present. Oh! such weather! It is too disgusting for words. The streets are in the most horrible condition. It has rained some, but I don't mind the rain, but the thaw is the disgusting part. We had a good deal of ~~æ~~ snow and fine sleighing for Xmas. & It was cold enough to freeze one, a week ago, and today it is too hot for comfort. I am sitting in a room without a particle of heat, (and a room that has no register) and my window is wide open, and still I feel as tho' I couldn't breathe. Every one seems to feel the same way & in the horse car today a lady was using a fan. Only think of the change from last Wednesday, and only imagine the sts of N.Y. Oh no you can't imagine anything so dreadful as the walking has been and is still. Mamma and Lottie have gone to the theater tonight with Uncle Ten Eyck and Aunt Jennie. They went to the Madison Square theater to see "Private Secretary." It has had a run now of about a hundred consecutive nights & they say it is very good, and it is very hard to get seats. The house is packed every night. When Uncle Ten Eyck congratulated me he didn't add "I'm not surprised." I expected he would, for he used to be always teasing me about you. You remember he was at our house once or twice when you had been missing trains, and of course he tho't he knew lots, but of late I think he has rather had his eye on Mr. Zerfass because the latter always happens to be here when Uncle Ten Eyck is here, and either he was surprised or else he was warned beforehand that he must not say "I'm not surprised" or he would "get himself disliked." Any way he didn't say it, and hasn't teased or tried to tease a bit. This surprises me for I supposed he'd give me no peace at all, for he is a terrible tease and is usually unmerciful, but he takes it very quietly and acts very nice about it. And now my own Harry I don't know where or how to begin. It seems to me I can never do the subject justice, for your Xmas letters and the letter I received this morning are all unanswered, and there is so much in each one I'd like to write about, and I don't know how I can do it all in one letter, and I can't seem to get started, for I want to say so many things at once. Happy New Year. Well I beat you this time. It seems as tho' bedlam was let loose. The whistles, bells, guns, etc etc, to say nothing of the small boy whose voice is to be heard thro' all. Goodness! It gets worse and more of it every second. I never heard any thing like it. They act worse than usual, fish horns, & fire crackers, and all sorts of things have turned up. I wonder how long they'll keep it up. There goes a bugle. Oh! Oh! There goes the worst whistle yet. You never never heard such a time. Every thing now is going at once, & even the small boy's voice is drowned. The house fairly shakes. Dear old '84 has gone now. Do you remember a year ago tonight? I went to Madison when I had finished my lessons, took the 5:30 train. You and Abe & his wife met me at the depot. We watched '83 out & '84 in. Do you remember how we all sat watching the clock? & you got ahead of us all. Well I am glad you did for your wish came true. You wished us all a happy New Year, and I certainly have had a happy one, in spite of all I suffered before Sept 8th. My happiness since has more than made up for all I suffered before. I'm so glad that '84 went out so happily, and that the last week of it was all pleasant, that all our misunderstandings had been settled thoroughly, that your family became reconciled. Surely '84 has done a great deal for us. It gave us to each other, & then it gave us

all the trials before it left us, because it knew us, & knew just how to help us, didn't leave it for the New Year to do all that part. It took too much interest in us to leave that work for a new & untried year. It hurried on all the worst things so that there would be time to get us thro' them safely, and wouldn't go out forever until it had straightened us all out, & helped us to understand each other, so that we needn't fear any serious damage from future misunderstandings. I suppose we cant be free from them any more than other people, but they cant work mischief now, or shake our faith in one another. Our first quarrels, no not quarrels, for we haven't had any fights at all for we haven't been really angry once. Well then not our first quarrels, but our first misunderstandings, were more serious & more dangerous than any can be now. The old year guided us safely thro', & now has left us perfectly happy, (in spite of the fact that we are so far apart). It leaves us in the care of the new year and this new year has promised to do much for us. Dear old '84 can never be forgotten by either of us. To know that we have really commenced on the new year, on 1885 makes ~~the~~ June seem so much nearer than it has done before, to know we are in the same year with it & can now say this year we will be together again & not [that] we must wait till next year. Oh before I forget it I must tell you that I'm very glad you couldn't destroy the negative of your photo. That would have been a very rash thing to do. Suppose the house should burn down, or some thing should happen to the picture I have now. All this is not very likely, & yet there is no telling. You ought of course to have the negative preserved. We cant run the risk of losing it, for it would be terrible if any thing should happen to this, to feel that I couldn't have another. I wont think any less of it, and will be as careful of it as tho' a new one would be impossible to get, but it would be awful to feel that I couldn't have a new one. I'm very glad that the photographer did draw the line there. It is a very lovely idea of yours to want those nearest & dearest to you to have the only ones, but when I take my picture away, mamma will want a picture of her son — & I could not give her mine. Even when I had the original, I couldn't be persuaded to give her mine. Oh I guess I am glad, more than glad, that it wasn't destroyed. I'd like to thank the man who prevented you from being so foolish. I think I told you, in fact I know I told you, about Fritz recognizing it. Well he does more than that now ~~he~~. He cant understand what it means. ~~but~~ He sees your head but he cant find your body. He stands in front of it & barks & cries, and he gets so jealous if I touch it. He thinks I look at it, & pay it altogether too much attention and he dont approve of it at all. If I hold the picture in my hands he nearly has a fit. It makes him so mad. Perhaps you think that I'm "stuffing" you, but I'm not. It is actually true. I think it is awfully funny, but that dog is equal to anything. I dont know whether I'd be surprised if he suddenly began to talk, for he does all but talk now. The other day I was showing some one how he would act and took up the picture. He barked & cried, and just clawed me all over, begging me to put it down, & finally ran up to the mantel piece and bowed in front of it, to tell me he wanted me to put it there, and I pretended not to understand him. He kept it up till I said "What is the matter Fritz? Do you want me to put Harry up there," & he acted too happy & made a short quick ~~but~~ bow and jumped around as he does when he means "yes." You know the way he acts when I ask him if he would like a walk, or if he would like his dinner. When I put it there he was satisfied. If he had been able to talk he couldn't have made me understand any more. I tell you all this as a proof of the likeness. When it makes a dog jealous I guess we can consider it about as perfect a picture as one can have. And now my dearest Harry I must stop. I was in such a hurry to beat you this time in saying "happy new Year" that I didn't stop to

tell you that I had been interrupted. I came upstairs about eight o'clock, intending to write all evening but of course that couldn't be, and I had to be interrupted. And now it is very late & I am very tired, and under those circumstances I suppose you'd rather have the letter cut short. I haven't said half I want to, tho' I have answered one part of your Xmas letter, and you will see that I am in the clear sun light again and that we can never have such a serious misunderstanding as the one we have just passed thro'. I will never feel again as I felt a short time ago. I cant, for I must understand you now, for you have shown me what a mistake I made. I am so glad Dr Smart invited you to dinner Xmas & hope Prof Barnes or some one will do the same for you today. It would have made you blue on Xmas if you had been alone in the forlorn, dismal place you tell about, and I hope you wont have to take New Years dinner there. It seems so funny to say today, and yet it is right, for it is Thurs. Jan. 1st 1885, and I must get to bed.

Goodbye my own dearest dearest dearest Harry
Your own loving
Effie.

Jule rec'd your letter yesterday (Wed. Dec. 31st 1884). I hope my next letter (which you'll receive on Sunday,) will not be cut short, tho' most people wouldn't think this needed any apology on that ground, but we call it very poor dont we? But we'll "hope for better things in store".

With another ton of love to be added to the unmeasured amount from your own
Effie

The pen, Our pen, has commenced the New Year well hasn't it?