

RHODA BARNES to MILTON BARNES

Home Feb' 23^d 1865

My dear husband -

Monday evening [February 20] I went down to the office and got a nice good long letter from you, two sheets full - I do like to get that kind [-] nice sheets written all fine & close with kind loving tender words - I felt so sorry for you "poor sing" that you seemed to be rather desponding, [and] seemed to be looking on the dark side of everything - cheer up darling - only six months and a few days until you will be free once more - subject to the orders of inferior, superiors no longer - A great many think that we shall have peace in a less time than even that - tis hard to tell - for it seems[,] as Mrs. Neeland says[,] that the Rebel leaders have been given up by Satan as entirely ahead of him - But we can only speculate about how and when such & such things will come to pass - we can not know much with certainty, I sometimes think God will give us a glorious peace, just in his own time & way - perhaps just in a time when everything looks most gloomy & dark. It may burst upon us like sunshine from behind a dark ominous looking cloud.

Mother says just tell Pa Tirza is sitting by the other side of the stand writing to him. She is almost well again except some cold yet - I am giving her a preparation of Iodine that Dr. Hoge prescribed for her bowels - I hope she will soon be well and strong. she is rather more amiable now than she was last week - poor little darling -

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I hardly know what to tell you about Jim - you seem to be so very anxious that we should have him go to some darkies [sic] house - there are none in town that I suppose could possibly take him - his cough is a very great deal better - but he is no stronger except that he seems to have more disposition to walk around and visit the darkies, he is still able to wait on himself, I dont think he wants to go anywhere else to stay - seems to think he is a fixture here - Mrs Thomson was up the other evening & she advised us to send him back to his own country with Dr Stewart [-] we thought it a pretty good idea, thought maybe the trip and getting back to his climate & people might do him good - Mother asked him how he would like to go - expecting surely to see a faint grin on his poor, dismal countenance - but was much astonished when he muttered out - "if I could go with the Regiment I['d] like well enough to go - & I'd like to see my Mudder" - ["]but there's ^{no} place for me dar[]' - spec my Mudder is washing at some hospital - I could get no medicine dar[] & no body'd mind a sick nigger["] - so we just had to abandon that plan - so if he gets bedfast we'll just have to hire some black person to come & nurse him - I'd like to take my meals away from home when it comes to that, but I'll just have to grin and bear.

Charlie proposed to write to Captain Roseman [sic. Rosemond] about Jim[']s brother coming to see him but I suppose he had no idea of doing so when he said it, he's such a gas tuk[.] I'll write myself if Jim gets worse - Someone said he was just as stupid as Jim, & we thought we didn't [need?] any

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more of the same sort here very badly -

When I wrote ~~to~~ Monday [February 20] I told you about having an offer for the house, I went round Tuesday and made some inquiries and found that it would be impossible to [find] anywhere to go into, [and] as to boarding[,] Mother can't think of it - & I dont know where we should board - & we'd have to store away our things - & then have no house for you to come to next Sept' - or if you should get sick in the meantime. Alex McCracken advised me not to sell it at this time unless you were very anxious, said he thought property would sell higher - I felt disappointed but we have tried [to] settle ourselves down until you get home - My dear - is'nt that best? Clarks had a letter from Rosy, she arrived safely in Oregon - much improved in health, & was married on the 23d Jan[uary] - [they] are boarding - getting along very nicely - was ever a novel more novel?

Mother is anxious about your cough - says she knows you have it all the time & that it will settle ^[sic] on your lungs - if you dont get rid of it - that scamp of a Dick said you had no cough - I've not seen Cap' Carlisle yet - have you any notion of getting a leave like the others - when [Colonel] Lane returns[?] - I wish you could avoid hearing his empty curses - I cant express the contempt I feel for such ignorantly profane Braggadocios[.] There are so many of them in our army -

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I am glad to hear that you were favorably impressed with your new general [Van Derleer.] - hope he may wear well - Mother laughs at me so about writing so often to you that I almost hate to say I'm going to write, if I was'nt so sure that it is none to[o] often for my dear husband to get letters - [I'm] sure that he felt [sic] so too - Good bye darling - love from all - Your own Rhoda -