

Robert Emmett's letter to Sarah Curran

September, 1803

My dearest Love,

I don't know how to write to you. I never felt so oppressed in my life as at the cruel injury I have done you.

I was seized and searched with a pistol over me before I could destroy your letters. They have been compared with those found before.

I was threatened with having them brought forward against me in Court.

I offered to plead guilty if they would suppress them.

This was refused. My love, can you forgive me?

I wanted to know whether anything had been done respecting the person who wrote the letter, for I feared you might have been arrested.

They refused to tell me for a long time.

When I found, however, that this was not the case,

I began to think that they only meant to alarm me;

but their refusal has only come this moment,

and my fears are renewed.

Not that they can do anything to you even if they would be base enough to attempt it,

for they can have no proof who wrote them,

nor did I let your name escape me once.

But I fear they may suspect from the stile,

and from the hair, for they took the stock from me,

and I have not been able to get it back from them, and that they may think of bringing you forward.

I have written to your father to come to me tomorrow.

Had you not better speak to himself tonight?

Destroy my letters that there may be nothing against yourself,

and deny having any knowledge of me further than seeing me once or twice.

For God's sake, write to me by the bearer one line to tell me how you are in spirits.

I have no anxiety, no care, about myself;

but I am terribly oppressed about you.

My dearest love, I would with joy lay down my life, but ought I to do more?

Do not be alarmed; they may try to frighten you; but they cannot do more.

God bless you, my dearest love.

I must send this off at once; I have written it in the dark. My dearest Sarah, forgive me.