

Hiltons Head Island Nov 27th 1861

My Darling Wife,

The mail has arrived from N.Y. to day. and brought your dear letter. I have just finished writing it and [I*] taken up my pen to answer it. I have one by me now.,that I have been waiting for a chance to send so you will get great one it not a/good one. It would do you good to see the camp tonight, or any other time when we get a mail. this is one of the greatest joys that we receive to get a letter from home. but I am not good at discription, so I will not try to discribe the pleasure that is expressed in the face of every one that I meet when the mail arrives, and then comes disappointment to some joy for others.

My Dear little numbscull: you express a great deal of fears on my account. I want you to beleive that the danger "is all in your eye". up to the date of this I have not been within a mile of danger. and I have not much hope of seeing the least bit of a "scrimage" while we stay here, if we should happen to have an attact on the place. we are felly prepared to give them "the tallest kind of fits" We have a fleet of gunboats here, the sauciest little crafts that ever floated that are steaming around, with their heavy guns, and so light of drught that they run close in shore and throw shells & shot like the very devil. they are having all the fun to themselves. They have been off up the river yesterday and this morning, thundering away with their big guns, at fort Pulaski. so they say, we hear tonight that they have taken the fort. I think the report is true. You can safely keep up you faith that I shall come back to you. for the chances, as far as human calculation goes, are greatly in my favor. for my part I feel just as safe here, as ever I did at home, but I suppose that you worry about me, untill you get me where you can take care of me yourself. and then you will think that I am safe. Well that will be pleasant and I am waiting patiently for the time to come when I shall come back to my home and friends, and then I do not think you will ever regret that I left, for I shall have learned to appreciate the blessings of civilized life. The sufferings that you speak so feelingly about. are rather uncomfortable to be sure, but then we have a great many good laughs over them, so you see that we do not take it to heart very much. Brewster has been home sick all of the time. I pity him or anyone else that is troubled in that way, and am truly thankful that I have not been so. As ~~me~~ much as I should like to be with you, I should be sorry to hear that the Reg^t was ordered for home now, for I want to spend the Winter once and not see any snow. We had a very slight frost a few nights ago, about as much as we have there in Aug sometimes. You want to know what you shall send me. I dont know of anything that you can send but the things that I mentioned in the other letter which will come with this. those things I must have. I can do without anything better than. those. We were laughing today when we were eating our dinner about the style of living that we were getting used to, one says, when we get home we shall not know how to eat like human beings till we get civilized again. another said no, when they call me to my meals. I suppose, instead of sitting down at the table I shall take a plate and sit down on the floor. I wrote so much in the other letter that I do no remember wha[t] I have written. but if you do get it twice you will not care. I did think of not sending it but guess if you feel as I do you will be glad of anything that comes from me You ask me to tell you more about John Kelley. there is but little to tell he was not sick but a few hours. I saw him on deck just before daylight in the morning and talked withe him for some time, he said that he was not well, and I felt his pulse & told him to come at the Surgeons call and let him

give him some medicine. he said he guessed he would and after talking awhile he said he wanted some water and went below to get it. & I saw no more of him till about 10 o'clock when I went into the Hospital & found him there. with a very high fever. he looked very wild, but knew me when he saw me. I said what you here? he said yes, I thought I would come and stay a short time. I found that he was very sick. H & went & found Eastman and asked him to go in & see him. we went in together, the Dr. prescribed for him but told me when we went out that he thought he would die, but would do the best he could for him. we all did all that we could to make him comfortable but he was out of his senses most of the time. Just at night Dr. E. & the Brigade Surgeon, Dr. Craven, & Dr. Greeley were there and ordered some medicine for him, he did not know me then,. & appeared to be in a great deal of pain. he laid with his head in Dr. Dearborns lap. Dearborn is one of the nurses & one of the best of men/ I went below to get some suppe[r] and in a few minutes D. came down and said he was dead. it was not though prudent to keep him so he was buried the same night. the services were on deck and all the officers attending. I have a ring which I took from ~~the~~ his finger and some of his hair. I should have written to his father and enclosed them in a letter. but his Capt' said that he should write and send his things home and would send these, but I have not heard anything more about it.

Perhaps I had better inclose them to you. I think I will you can send them to his family

About the article that you refer to in the Journal I have not seen it and so cannot tell you who the cowar[d] was that he refered to. There were several newspapers correspondents on board, but as to the Reg^t I do not think that he had much of a chance to form an opinion in regard to them. as to their courage I will bet on that "I dont beleive that any set of men were ever cooler in danger. than they were the night that we struck on the shoal. much cooler than the officers of the ship I thought. certainly they were not so much frightened as the officers of the Reg^t. As to the negroes I am not able to say much about them as I have not had much talk with them, my duties keep me confined pretty close so that there is not much time for me to look up these "noble looking" darkies that the Journal speaks of. and most of those that come around here are about the worst looking sett for humans that ever I saw. you dont see any such monkey faced negroes at the north as there is here. I was looking at a picture that had some negroes...
[fragment letter ends here]