



My very bad Friend,

And so you have let all these weeks, since our first meeting & last parting, go by, without writing me a line.

How atrocious! You are quite mistaken in supposing that I think you "the gentlest mannered man that ever, etc, etc"

— I could imagine one much gentler! However, 'variety is the spice of life'. If you had sent me a sugary little note, from Newport, on Tiffany's best night-blooming-cereus-scented-squashed-strawberry-+ - cream-tinted paper, I should only have tossed it aside & said meditatively: "Yes, this is the way he talks to all my sex — in some form or other."

he has said this very thing twenty times this week - to Mrs E. D. Morgan & to Mrs E. D. Jr - to Mrs John Jacob Astor & to Mrs W. W. - to Mrs Ellis & to his fiancée, Miss " (Excuse me, but I really cannot remember which one you are engaged to at present!) But your taciturnity towards me is a distinction. If any of those lovely ladies said to you "It is a fine day", of course you would reply. Your acting towards me as if you were a Hottentot, is so exceptional, that I must feel complimented.

By-the-way, are you acquainted with Dr Van Buren? He was here the other day - & how you would have laughed, if you could have looked in at us! He came with a friend of mine, but as his

card was not sent up, I expected to find only my friend in the parlor. I ran down stairs, looking like an angel, in dotted white muslin - (I hope you know that the angels always wear that - probably because there are so many of them, that they have to be economical - & it is pretty, considering.) Through the half-open door, I caught a glimpse of some grayish hair & a fine, large figure - not at all like my friends - & I thought! - what do you think I thought? Of course it was very absurd, when I knew that only two days before he had been on exhibition at Niagara, or some such place - but I really did mistake him for Jumbo! As soon as I was in the parlor, I saw my blunder,

but the introduction was instantaneous & I held out my hand & exclaimed: "Oh, Dr Van Buren, I am very glad to see you - I have heard about you so often," all with a seraphic look of surprise & delight, which in reality was not intended for him at all, but for - for Jumbo. The next day, my friend said: "You made quite an impression on Dr V." "How do you know?" I asked. "Oh, I know, by his manner," was the reply. "When we left, he asked just one question about you & then he leaned back in the carriage & did not speak for quite a while." I felt guilty. Honesty ought to have compelled me to say: "I hope he does not think I am as nice as that always - that first look was not meant

for him at all." But then my friend would have asked: "Was it for me?" - & honesty would have compelled me to say: "No." And then my friend would have said: "For whom?" - & then honesty would - no, I don't think it could have compelled me to say anything so absurd as: "For - for Jumbo." But it was a ridiculous affair altogether - & I know you are laughing at me. But I do not resent it - I am willing that you should laugh at me once in a while, because I say such temper-trying things to you occasionally.

I hope you are a great deal better for all the delightful sea air - & the petting - you have had along the New England coast. But how about those mountains, you were in such

haste to reach? Why do you come to New York just now? If it is to get something pretty for Nip - (you know the name) your motive is ideal - if it were only to see me, it would be rather good - but I am afraid it is to see some of "those horrid men" & to stir up some political mischief. You ought to have kept out of the state till after the Saratoga Convention. Your coming here just now will go far to confirm the impression that you are actively interested in the State election.

But, if you are here, may I ask, are you coming to see me? I have made one little visit out of town, since I saw you, & expect to make two more before going to Saratoga, but will not run away just

now, if there is any probability of my seeing you. That would seem cowardly - wouldn't it? - to run away, just when you were coming - just as if I were afraid of your scolding me, politically. And I am not a coward at all - except when I am - which is generally. But perhaps you are not coming. I would like to know - but I won't ask you to let me - because when I tell you to do one thing, you almost always do the other, don't you? So goodbye, till the next time - if there is any next.

Yours sincerely,

J. S. S.
46 E. 74th St New York. [Julia S. Sand]
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