

Englewood N. J.  
Sept 25<sup>th</sup>, 1881.

Hon. Chester A. Arthur.



And so Garfield is  
really dead - & you are President.  
For a time it seemed as if we  
all were mistaken - as if he  
meant to 'disappoint our fears.'  
Then I felt I owed you an  
apology for what I had written.  
Perhaps I owe you one now, for  
writing at all. My only excuse  
for this letter, is the deep sympathy  
I feel for you in your sorrow.  
All through these sad, dreary days,  
I have followed your name in  
the newspapers, with the feeling  
that you were chief mourner.  
Even contemplating the wife, the  
mother, the children of the departed,  
has not changed your position.  
Great as their suffering is, it is  
what hundreds, in the obscurity  
of private life, have suffered  
before them - what thousands  
suffered, in the old war times -  
& they have those consolations  
which come to all who mourn  
for the brave & the true. But your  
affliction is different. The very

thoughts which assuage their grief, but add a pang to yours. What we all endured during the terrible months of anxiety just past, you too endured - intensified ten thousand fold by the reflection that you were the one human being to benefit by his death - that you had been opposed to him - that some believed you capable of having plotted for his cruel end. You were alone in your sorrow - perfectly isolated. All that family affection + the thoughtfulness of friends could do for you, may have been done; but it was not possible that your dearest friend or nearest relative could lift the burden from your heart. You could not put what you suffered in words - + if you could, no one would have comprehended - no one had lived through your experience. There is in that dumb anguish a pathos surpassing all else. But it is God's will that in our greatest sorrow we should

be alone - absolutely cut off from human aid. Perhaps it is this that makes us call it greatest. In such affliction, the soul puts forth new life. You are a better + a nobler man than you were a very short time ago. Nothing could be more beautiful than the manner in which you have borne yourself through this long, hard ordeal. The people feel it so. There was more promise in your dignified silence, than there could have been in the loudest protestations. You have disarmed the majority of your opponents. It is true some regard your whole course as a matter of policy, your conduct as a fine piece of acting - perhaps they have no appreciation of what is fine in nature - + they expect that soon you will change. It is sad to endure, when your motives all are good. But it is what you will have to bear - the natural consequence of your past career. However, in time, you can prove to them that they are mistaken. When I think of your inauguration, the

Wishing you well in all your endeavors, Yours Respectfully, J. J. Sand.

solemn oath administered to you in the small hours of that terrible night, free from all worldly pomp, instead of the applause of the multitude, the kiss of your eldest son, there seems little fear that you will betray your trust. You have a deeper inspiration to duty than falls to the lot of most men. There is a great sadness overhanging the whole community - on whom it falls more heavily than you. Perhaps, long after men have ceased commenting on your countenance, you will feel it resting upon you still. Do not try to shake it off. It is best so. There are higher things in life than what we call happiness. And there is consolation for sorrow like yours - though it comes slowly. It is impossible for you to have it now, if you have taken in the full lesson of this national crisis. But, years hence, you will have it, in the retrospect, when you see clearly how each day of this severely protracted trial has brought you nearer to the hearts of your fellow countrymen, & purified your own heart & given you the strength, the courage & the wisdom to do a good work for the world.

P. S. It is hard to guess what time or inclination you may have, at present, for newspaper reading - but, if you have not already seen it, I think the enclosed will repay you for perusal. It has more definiteness of idea than most of the editorials afloat just now. It expresses exactly what is in my own thoughts, but with a force I cannot give it - for, though you may not be quite indifferent to the good wishes of people in private life, when it comes to opinions & advice, they must have more value emanating from persons of practical public experience.

And yet, may I say one word? If it is possible, do not make any nominations just now. If the Senate meets, chooses its presiding officer & then adjourns, is not that all that is absolutely necessary? What the nation needs most at present, is rest. We all are worn

out with watching - & when people are very tired, they are apt to be irritable, unreasonnable & ready to quarrel on small provocation. If a doctor could lay his finger on the public pulse, his prescription would be, perfect quiet. You, more than any other man in the country, can give us this, simply by ~~op~~erting yourself in a negative way. Of course the thing cannot last, but one month of peace would be a great refreshment to the whole country.

Yours Sincerely,  
J. J. S.

Sept 28<sup>th</sup> 1851.

[Julia S. Sand]



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