

I dashed away in headlong flight—I could, I would not believe it. . . .

But alas, my friend, what matters my believing it or not—it *was* my mother!

Poor, poor mother! This is the crushing blow, if such there be here. I thought I had known the worst—but this is awful, awful!

What more shall I say? Words are powerless—the despair of hell you cannot conceive. It were poor consolation that, being equally miserable now, we might weep together, uphold one another, comforting each other in pain. But even that is denied! Tears we have not—sympathy there is not, at least, I have not found it—and naturally, since love is utterly unknown here. We can only cower side by side, through ages to come—each taken up with self. Fellowship? Nay, but it is worse than desert loneliness. We have not a word to say to one another; we dread to look at each other. Everything between us is cold, dead—dead. We have our own agony of fire, each within the soul; but that fire which goes forth to warm another is as a burnt-out crater filled with the ashes of despair. . . .

I can write no more . . . fare thee well!

THE END