

Lady Elgin to Queen Charlotte

AA

49312

49311

Thrusbury Lodge Sept. 1804

I have waited my dear Madam till you were settled at Weymouth before I troubled your Majesty with a letter which in every respect is one of the most painful I ever wrote and one which I humbly beg you never never will mention to any one - The communication is entirely for your Majesty's trustiness - to your goodness in granting my request I shall candidly relate the most extraordinary scene I was ever involv'd in and which has so agitated me that I really believe I shall never recover it. - The simple story is this - The Prince of Wales' return from South End occasion'd the usual Intercourse Her R. H. was here and Prince Charlotte was at Blackheath but on Sunday the 16 August Her R. H. arriv'd in great spirits here calling from her carriage that she had great news to tell us, and desired that we would guess what would make us happiest. Prince Charlotte immediately exclaimed, going to Windsor. - Her royal Highness replied, not just that but you are going to New. The King has wrote to me to go to New and bring you with me tomorrow at one o'clock, to take leave of us before he goes to Weymouth - I was surpris'd not knowing your Majesties were going to the sea side - The Prince of Wales continued in high spirits & said to Luncheon - she repeated the invitation often and enjoin'd me not to be too late - Her royal Highness even said we might go with her but I declined that Honour on account of Prince Charlotte's very nervous tendency & the necessity of keeping H. R. H. quiet before any exertion - Before the Prince went I became uneasy - it was very odd. The verbal invitation from the King - not a word from any of the Princesses & I recollect'd that I never had carried Prince Charlotte to your Majesty's presence without your commands convey'd ^{sic. that} some by one of the Princesses. The moment the Prince of Wales left us - I convinc'd myself your Majesty was displeas'd with me - I had not had a line of enquiry ever since the 7 July. - How could I carry the little Princess & present her myself without being more particular

desired - yet I could not decline the Prince of Wales's command -
It was too late to send to Windsor, most fortunately I saw in
the newspapers that the Prince of Wales was to be in Town
about that time - I wrote his Royal Highness a note merely to
say I had received an invitation different from the usual
mode & I was going to take Princess Charlotte to New in
consequence - This I thought would save me from any
suspicion & I flattered myself when I told your Majesty
you would laugh at my timidity - On our arrival ten
minutes before the time the good King received Princess
Charlotte with the greatest kindness and me also. His Majesty
took us into the dining Room - But no words can describe
my astonishment when his Majesty said he was alone,
& that he came merely to see the Prince of Wales and the
dear little girl before he went to Weymouth - soon after,
his Majesty said he was to have Princess Charlotte all to
himself - The Prince of Wales wished it but he could say
nothing on the subject till he returned to Windsor - His
Majesty assured me, your Majesty and all the Princesses
were well - The Prince of Wales came in ten minutes - The
King went to receive her and took her into another room
and soon sent Princess Charlotte to desire I would take her
& Mrs Lisle into the garden - When I looked about me
I saw no person I ever knew but Miss Tunstall standing
like a statue by the door of the opposite room where she
then remained, for I could not speak - your Majesty cannot
form an idea of my feelings - I really never was in such
a state - at dinner his Majesty revived me a little by giving
me the Comfort of seeing him eat his Dinner heartily of
Dudding & Dumplings - Talked much of Weymouth, I was
much afraid of his over exerting - in vain did I offer my
poor services His Majesty made even the Coffee himself -
But without you my dear Madam this charming Supper
I was^{so} completely wretched that I was quite stupid - I resolved

lady
on pe
Wales
I tried
cons
from
her wa
Cartha
wished
but he
dear
own C
Cartha
Wynn
rest -
of Wo
three
I found
and
comple
a few
him
dread
he wa
had
at Ne
by the
Anqui
Majest
would
before
the R
me if
I need
to add
found

Lady Elgin to Queen Charlotte

AA

49312

on perfect Science, when I came away, 'till I should hear from
London but on Wednesday morning I received the Prince of
Wales's commands to let him know what paper at my visit -
I tried to write & could not express myself so as to prevent
instructions being put on my expressions different perhaps
from my meaning therefore I said I wished much to see
Sir Walter Farguhar on my Son's Account & I would call at
Carlton House in my way up Streets & if his Royal Highness
wished to ask me any Questions I would answer himself
but no one else - For the first time in my life I left my
dear precious Charge alone with Mr Gagein - I went in my
own Carriage and was told there was no message for me at
Carlton house & after calling on Sir Walter went to a small
Room where my little matters were kept till the horses sho-
rest - I was just going away when a servant of the Prince
of Wales's came to desire me to go to the Prince, it was
three o'clock - I was introduced to his Royal Highness who
I found alop in the most violent agitation & disorder of mind
and Body, H. R. H. had had a violent Cramp and a Bowel
complaint occasioned by his misery - which after asking me
a few questions which I could answer without occasioning
him any trouble thank God, he informed me of such
dreadful cruel things as well might put him in the state
he was in & he added, the terrible information he had got
had stop't his attending a meeting that was to have been
at New at 12 o'clock when the Blessing so long pray'd for
by the Nation. was it seems to have taken place - But the
Anxiety the Prince was in and his affectionate regard to your
Majesty occasion'd in him a Warmth of Temper that I dreaded
would throw him into a fever. - Thank God he was better
before he left Town as I heard by accident, as the Name of
the Royal family seldom passes my lips - The Prince asked
me if I meant to write your Majesty, His royal Highness said
I need not, He would inform you he had seen me & I am glad
to add He seem'd pleased with my conduct - I have however
found it uncomfortable not writing your Majesty on this

Occasion having always communicated every circumstance
of importance since I have been so connected & so truly
attached to your Majesty who I have long considered as
my true & best friend - If I have done wrong, I trust the
notion will ensure me your forgiveness.

God grant you may find the King recovering every
day in health & strength and attain yourself my dear Madam
that Peace and Quietness God has so long deprived you of
- We must all have Tribulation in this World & the next
line is Be of good Cheer - Often have I thought Your
Majesty understood that passage better than any body -
Many times have I seen you cheerful and gay when you were
in much anguish & the same merciful Assistance will I
trust be granted to your Majesty in every time of need.
I can enter on no other Subject this evening, but merely
say that Dear Prince Charlotte as well and that I have
the Honour to be my dearest Madam

Your grateful & ever faithful Subject
M. Elgin. Bowager.

Copy.

Sept 4th 1818.

D. I.