



Trinidad de Cuba, July 4th, 1847

My Dear Friend,

What a pleasure it would be for me to see you this morn, and I would that you could take a peep into my room, but no. I will not wish that, for you would be sad whenever you thought of it after. Yet if you could view only one side of the scene, you would rejoice, that there was beneath the sky so fair a land. The sun shines pleasantly upon us, though occasionally his rays are screened from us, by the few light clouds which are floating along in air, between us and the deep blue dome above. A light breeze plays with the flowers of brilliant hues that bloom beneath a southern sky, and now and then comes laden with their perfume, to fan my brow.

'Tis truly called a bright and sunny land, and mournful is it that slavery's galling chain is felt throughout the island. I will not repeat aught to you to call forth that sympathy which I know already too keenly feels the state of those in slavery, I will not speak of those things which would make the blood leave your cheek of ashy paleness, already by study and reading you are familiar ^{with them} and which you have already so nobly tried, by every means in your power to alleviate. I was told by a person

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Date: July 4, 1847

Description: Letter from Maria to Elizabeth Mountfort about life in Trinidad, Cuba and slavery there.

who a year ago took a tour through the southern and eastern states, that slavery was blessed freedom there, to what it is here on the plantations. An American lady speaking of the warmth of the weather in the summer season, said, "I should like to spend some time in the country, were it not for the shrieks of the slaves, which you hear constantly, some one or another, being nearly all the time at the whipping post." Surely I had no idea of what it was to hold fellow creatures in bondage, till I lived amongst it. As we reflect on it, we are subject to strange thoughts, indeed if it were not almost impious I should ask, why were these beings created to be so wretched? I think you have no idea what a deathstroke it must be to those sensibilities of our nature, which lead us to feel for others' woes, to mourn for others' tears and griefs, to be a slave holder. Let us pass from the painful subject. I did not mean to speak of it, but my thoughts carry me away, against my wishes. I pray it may not be long ere freedom's standard shall be unfurled to the breeze, that will waft the glad sound of emancipation, to every people and o'er every land, where the iron yoke is known. You have this morn I suppose listened to the sound of the church going bell, the call to the house of prayer, and perhaps even now are listening to the words of truth and instruction which fall from the lips of a minister of Christ, if it is so my dear Elizabeth, bestow one thought, upon one who is happy when she thinks of her friend, as she often

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does, and who is for the present deprived of the blessed privilege which you now and I hope may ever enjoy. But it is a consolation to know that the watchful eye, the tender care of the Father of all goodness, is ever over us, to guide and protect us, if we but seek to be led by his truths.

Since I have been here, I have been as happy as I could be so separated from my friends, so far from home. The climate is very pleasant, though rather warm, the people, what I have met, kind and friendly. Taking it for granted that you have heard of my passage and arrival here, I will not repeat any of it. Having heard much of the ill health of my mother since I left home, is it strange I sometimes wish myself there. 'Tis oft that the heart's fondest wish is homeward wing. I wish your Uncle Chase came to Trinidad and his niece would accompany him; would it not be fine; or don't you like the idea of a sea voyage? If you and Anna would make me a visit how happy I should be.

How is Anna and your Mother? please give my love to them, also to Mrs. Barbour, Mrs. Dennett and any other friend who is interested enough in me to care for my remembrance. Please say to Anna that it would give me much pleasure to hear from her, also all of my friends. And as I am making inquiries, how is my early, long tried friend Elizabeth? both well and happy I hope. Please tell her that it will give me great pleasure to hear from her and soon, very.

Today is the fourth of July - tell me how it is celebrated in P.

Yours with much love Maria

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