

Portland Mar 11/46.
Certainly, my dear Mrs Smith. — Although, between
ourselves, I have forsworn authorship, and never
mean to dabble with it again, if I can help it,
still there are cases where I cannot bring myself
to say no; and yours happens to be foremost
among that number.
What I may do, as old Sean says, I know
not — but something awful, you may be sure, and
I trust in season, for what you want.
Your publisher ought to come down handsomely
for you. It would be a shabby thing to avail them-
selves of your position and influence to get a
book for nothing — which book this neighbor would
have to pay comely for. But the profits ought to be
liberally shared with you.
Your friends are all well here — and if
they were at my elbow w^d send "lots of love" & all
that. Our baby — Margaret — is all you believe her
to be, sincere, affectionate, and simple hearted. How
long she may continue so, is doubtful — for I already
began to detect a little mischief, and something a
little spitefulness in her speech — never in her eye; therefore

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have I hopes.

My mother, sister & wife w^d all thank you,
if they knew of yr kind inquiries.

Margaret Fuller is not only a strange
woman — but her very strangeness is strange. A-
bout one half is affectation — sheer downright affecta-
tion — growing out of her pretended scorn for women
in trousers — and men in petticoats. I know her
well — I understand her well — & she knows
that I know her. A woman of decided, un-
questionable talent — she has been so long allowed
to snub others, and to sit in judgment on
others, that she gets scared at the aspect
of a snubber. She and I have had many
pleasant half hours together — for sooth
say, I love to make her show the woman,
which she flatters herself she has trampled
out, or wholly over come, in herself. I argue
& squabble & tease & taunt her — & others like from
a sense of duty. But she will be distinguished
nevertheless, & deserve to be so. Remember me
to her, I pray you — as to a she-gladiator,
whose weapon & close temper I love to
try.

Yr friend
John Neal

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John Neal.
Pd. J. Neal}
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Mrs Elizabeth Oakes Smith
Brooklyn
N York