

May 3. 1913.

RANDOLPH HALL
CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Laura: —

Had it been anyone but you who had asked me to explain what I have done I should never have done it, but I feel that to you I owe this explanation not only because you have always been a real friend to me but also because I would rather stand or fall at home on your judgment. What the others do or say, whether good or ill I care little because I feel that I have done what is right. Please do not think that I acted hastily or thoughtlessly in this — I tried to do what would be just both

to Dot and to myself. What I
suffered in making that decision
I hope and pray I shall never be
forced to go through again. Others
will tell you that I never loved
Dot and that I was brutal to her
for taking the decision into my
own hands. Perhaps you may
believe them even now. If you do,
I can do nothing but say that I
am sorry; it cannot change my
belief in the fact that I did what
was right — what alone would
bring happiness to one whom today
I respect above nearly everyone.
It was a question of happiness
against what the world would
say of me and what Dot would
of necessity have to suffer to
reach that happiness.

Perhaps you may understand
this better if you know my position

and the events that led me to make this decision.

During last summer the feeling began that Dot was not as happy with me as she might have been. She seemed to feel very deeply that I had not enough strength of mind to rule her as she wanted to be ruled and that I was continually hurting her feelings by being thoughtless in things which concerned her. Heaven knows that I tried to meet her standards and do as she would have me do, but it seemed of little avail. The first slip would bring upon me anger and what hurt more, the accusation of wilfully hurting her feelings. Had these troubles been only temporary all would yet have been right, but they weren't.

I came East with Dot's words in my memory that I must improve and be more thoughtful of her. I did my best to write regularly and often to ~~her~~ her, even neglecting my work to do it, but it did not seem to help matters much and I got behind in my work. I wrote to her telling her that I could not continue to write as often if I was to do successfully what I had been sent to college for and what the family expected of me. I wrote as often as my work would allow me to, but that did not seem enough.

Then I began to get letters filled with nothing but the praises of Wilbur Heming

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and the automobile rides which he and Dot took together and how Thoughtful he was and kind to her. But the last letter is burned into my mind so that I cannot forget it. It began with the usual lecture about my thoughtlessness and forgetfulness but that which I shall remember till the end is the sentence, "I find in him the depth and thoughtfulness which I have looked for but in vain in everyone but my father." I am a human being, Laura, of flesh and blood, not stone. She calls

me brutal, but she forgets that to fling my shallowness and Thoughtlessness into my teeth when I had tried with all my heart to live as she would have me is a far more brutal thing than I ever thought of doing.

Then the truth that I could not dodge came home to me. What happiness could there be for us - if she was always watching me for my faults and I with so many. I could not crawl and apologize again, I had been a weakling long enough and I still placed some value upon my self-respect. I explained all this to her and told her it was better that we part before we entered on the

path that knows no return.

There is no need to dwell upon the feelings in my heart at having to do this, the pain at having to break with one I loved and to whom I owed the happiest as well as some of the bitterest moments of my life. If there had been any way by which I could have kept my self-respect without breaking with her I should have found it. I can only say that I know she will be happier later on. For myself, it makes little difference now. I have walked through a hell of my own making with the belief that I have done right. What does the opinion of the world matter to me now? I have lost what I prized above all things and now I must forget if there is to be any happiness for me. I give you this explanation trusting firmly in your justice and understanding. I ask for no allowances or pity, no sympathy or censure, but merely for the justice from you which I am afraid the world will never give.

Always sincerely yours,

Alau.