

Friday, may 30 (1856), 6. P.M.

My Dearest Friend,

We are aground again for the hundredth times since we commenced ascending this stream. It is well nigh un navigable & a muddier mass of water logs, sand & clay never was called a river. Indeed it hardly deserves the name. Many times I have heard that the Missouri was a larger stream than the Mississippi. A person must have had an active imagination to see it so. It is a small tributary of the Mississippi. Here we are twisting & wriggling on a bar where the water is not ½ mile wide while the Mississippi when it expands to the width of 2 miles will float the largest boats from shore to shore. Now we go again.

You are ready I presume to censure me slightly for not having more of the punctuality when strong minds pride themselves on. I did promise to write you the next day after I penned the last scrawl: But I do not like to write to an intimate friend with a dozen voices buzzing in my ears & besides I wrote Almeda the next day & presumed that you would hear of my whereabouts by her. We are now near Jefferson City & expect to be at Leavenworth City Sabbath morning. The Missouri is as uninteresting a stream to travel on as could be supposed. No such cheerful, thriving villages growing on its banks as break the monotony of the Mississippi. What few that might by courtesy be call towns are rickety & on a fast decline.

The “Morning Star” is however a magnificent boat with good officers & crew & has a good average of passengers, and such fare! It will be the death of me. I shall enter into no enumeration of the dishes. Suffice it to say that the Captain carries us all gratis who say we have ever had as good fare on any rivers before. All description of meats – wild & tame turtles & frogs – all kinds of fruit & wines, ice-cream, nuts &c, &c. It takes us more than an hour at dinner to become satisfied to leave the table. Supper will be on in half an hour but I do not feel as if I could ever endure the sight or smell of food again. The fact is I took a long nap after dinner & have not exercised sufficiently since to sharpen by appetite.

This compensates in part for the unattractive appearance of the Missouri & her shores & the beauty & excellence of her water for drinking makes up the rest, although so muddy that an eagle could not see a piece of chalk an inch below the surface. Yet when settled & cooled by ice it is excellent.

Well Eva all aground again – in fact we have set and shoved without causing any particular delay half a dozen times since this was commenced. The “Martha Jewett” lies in hailing distance. She left St. Louis on Wednesday evening & we on Thursday. She offered to carry us 6 dollars cheaper but she is one of the weakest & this is one of the if not the strongest & newest boat on the river – We have just taken some passengers from the other boat & will soon be off. You must be sure & remember me at Lawrence as soon as possibilities will permit & be assured my darling that although amidst the tumult of this crowd I can write nothing of affection or love. That your image is ever present to my dreams at night & by day & fills up & beautifies every picture of the future which fancy (possible?)

Yours Always,

Rome