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Washington D.C.
Apr. 15th 1865.

Dear Father,

It is with sad feelings that I take up my pen to address you. Last Friday night at 10 o'clock, I witnessed the saddest tragedy ever enacted in this Country. Notwithstanding my promise to you not to visit the theatre, I could not resist the temptation to see General Grant and the President, and when the curtain at Ford's rose on the play of Our American Cousin my room mate and I were seated on the second row of orchestra seats, just beneath the president's box. The President entered the Theatre at 8 o'clock, amid deafening cheers and the rising of all. Every thing was cheerful, and never

was our magistrate more enthusiastically welcomed, or more happy - (Many pleasant allusions were made to him in the play, to which the audience gave deafening responses, while Mr. Lincoln laughed heartily and bowed frequently to the gratified people - Just after the 3^d Act, and before the scenes were shifted, a muffled pistol shot was heard, and a man sprang wildly from the national box, partially tearing down the flag, then shouting "sic semper tyrannis, the south is avenged" with brandished dagger, rushed across the stage and disappeared. The whole theatre was paralyzed.

But two men sprang for the stage, a Mr Stewart & myself. Both of us were familiar with the play, and suspected the fearful tragedy

We rushed after the murderer, and Mr Stewart being familiar with the passages, reached the rear door, in time to see him spring on his horse and ride off - I became lost amid the scenery and was obliged to return. My roommate had followed me and secured the murderer's hat. The shrill cry of "murder" from Mrs Lincoln first roused the horrified audience, and in an instant the uproar was terrible. The silence of death was broken by shouts of "kill him, hang him" and strong men wept and cursed, and tore the seats in the impotence of their anger, while Mrs. Lincoln, on her knees uttered shriek after shriek at the feet of the dying President. Finally the theatre was clear

and the President removed
still greater was the excite-
ment in the city. Rumors
of the murder of Sisy Seward
and his son reached us
as we gained the street -
mounted patrols dashed
every where, bells tolled the
alarm, and excited crowds
rushed about the avenues,
Deep pain was on every coun-
tenance, and black horror
brooded over the city. Until
long after midnight I was
detained at Police Hd. Qrs,
giving my evidence, and
when I sought my room,
in a distant part of the city -
dark clouds had gathered
in the heavens, and sol-
diers sternly paced their patrol,
May I never see another
such night. I could not
sleep, I could only think,
till thought was weary,
and in deep pain thought again.

Yesterday morning the president
died. At 8 1/2 o'clock, the kindest,
noblest, truest heart ceased to
beat, and Abraham Lincoln
was dead. Let no man ever
speak to me again of Southern
Chivalry, or talk in sympathy
with traitors. The events of that
night can never be forgotten
and while there is strength
in my arm, I never can, never
will endure it - Nor stand
I alone - The nation is aroused
and terrible will be its ven-
geance, treason, pardoned,
forgiven, patiently dealt with by
our president, never less, has
strong the breach, that kindly
treated it, and the traitor
south has slain its truest, no-
blest friend. Bitter, bitter will
be the tears of repentance.
But I cannot write of it -
Andrew Johnson has been
sworn, His speech was simple

"The duties now ^{be} are mine, the
results are God's" I trust he
may perform his task faith-
fully, but oh, for the Confidence,
and the hope that we had in
Lincoln, Like a ship without
a rudder is the nation's vessel.
Outwardly are we quiet,
but in each heart, what terror
mourning and despair -

But I must cease - Lettu
& Will R - left here Friday night.
I presume by this time they
are with you. From them you
can learn of me, better than
I can write. Love to all.

Your affec son.

J. K. M.