



Transcription of Emma Goldman to Stella Ballantine Letter, June 29, 1919

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Jefferson City, MO, 29 June 1919

Darling, mine.

There is so much, so much I want to write you. I scarcely know where to begin & where to let off. I will have to content myself with the most essential & leave the other when we meet - just three months from today. My birthday - like last year I spent it in bed. Not quite so ill, but in pain & discomfiture. The same thing I had 2 weeks ago & which I will probably have to endure during most of the Summer. As a result of my laying off a very funny thing happened. Funny only because I have so short a time in here. Otherwise it would have been the beginning of a serious & bitter struggle. I have repeatedly written you how very decent Dr Mc Nearney has always been to me. Aside of Mr P's orders that I be permitted to go to my cell whenever I am ill, Dr Mc Nearney every time I consulted him ordered me to my cell until I would be better. Two weeks ago when I told him that I had endured my excruciating condition for a week before I decided to see him said "they should have let you ought of the shop the first day." Last Monday I began feeling badly again. By Wed evening, the chafe was so bad that I could neither sit nor walk, let alone run the machine. Yet I would not ask to leave the shop until I completed my task. Thurs. morning I saw Dr Mc N. He gave me the same things that so relieved me last time. I did not go down to see him again Friday or Saturday, thinking that there was no need to annoy them since I still had the medicine & all I really needed was rest. Imagine then my astonishment when on Saturday morning the colored strusty came to Kates & my cell & said "Dr Mc Nearney ordered you to work." It was so unusual that I couldn't believe it so I sent for S. She repeated the same thing & added, if we fight to go to the shop we'd remain locked in. Now if I still had a long time to do or if that had not been the first time anyone connected with this institution least of all Dr Mc Nearney had issued such an order, I should of course have remained in my cell. As it is I went to work & pulled through the half day by hiring some help. Not for a moment do I believe Dr Mc N ever issued the order. There must be an hitch somewhere. I hope my condition does not get bad again to the point of preventing my work. Otherwise I will ask to see P or have a talk with the Doctor, who really has been very kind to me. So that is how I spent my birth-day. But outside of that I was made very happy by our many friends. However it was not until Friday Eve when I was permitted to have what was sent me. On Thursday, at noon, 2 boxes of exquisite pink roses were sent to my cell. One from dear faithful Lillian Kisluik 1817 Kinnon St Washington DC. And one from our own lovely, tender Max. In the Eve came telegrams from the Kate O Hare Committee, a beautiful washable silk Kimono, from dear Minnie Fishman 245 A Wash Ave. N Y C. Delicious 49 W soaps and Eau de Cologne from little Emogene Burr 2905 Clay St S F. And a box of the best

Chocolates from big hearted little Ben. Besides some letters from friends Friday, nothing was sent up. I didn't know until Saturday morning why the many flowers which are always sent up at noon, were not sent up. I realized Sat that it must have been as a punishment to fit my audacious crime, of staying in without again asking permission, a thing I was never before in all these 17 months expected to do. However no official living could rob me of my faith & undying belief in my dear ones. Mrs Huegel is not in town, so neither cake or chicken came. I am not so sure they would had the lady been in town. She has done absolutely nothing for Kate except see her once though she said so much about her friendship for K. In the Eve of the 27th I received your beautiful birth day letter. Indeed you are my precious own child more so than any child of the flesh could be. Then, there was a beautiful wire from Leon Malmed, one from Ben K & friends, one from Stewart Kerr, one from Beckie & Wm Nathanson, one from Sarah Gruber. Letters from own Max in his usual lovely mood from H H, from Emogene Burr, from dear own Ruthie. When we returned to our cells, the flowers were sent up. Alas, a great many were dead, but not the spirit, that no power on earth - least of our prison officialdom can slay. The box from you my darling contained Lilies Hydrangeas & delicate pink carnations - all in perfect condition. A huge bunch of red, white and pink carnations from Kitty B, a bunch of many colored Asters nearly all dead, from Emogene Burr - she would be beautiful rambler roses from Leon Malmed. A box of chocolates from black eyed Susan Danny. A lovely leather picture case with Miriam's darling baby's pictures in it from Ruthie. Among the numerous letters, I received one which moved me greatly, it was a typewritten message signed by 50 names, Rose Pastor Stokes among them - names of people I do not even know. Where did they get to know that June 27th is my birth-day & that this year is my 50th anniversary? Yesterday I got two more wires from Los Angeles, from our Com Moushe Lerner & a group of girls, among them Gertrude Barrett. Now, sweetheart, I want all these tokens of love & devotion acknowledged. I hope you have your typewriter. You probably have not the addresses of all the people I mentioned, get them from Fitzie. If you only write a postal to each from Fitzie. If you only write a postal to each it will do. We cannot let so much love go unacknowledged. Perhaps you could write a letter to Freedom H K now edits & send my appreciation to all the comrades who have so kindly remembered me. You will know best. But you must write to Beela Newman Zilberman 33 Cypress Agyle Rd. Flat Bush NY. I am sure, she was the one who got those fifty signatures to that beautiful message. Tell her I was particularly stirred by their faith in me that I will never become like Babushka. I hope with all my heart I may never, never betray their trust. Fraternal greetings about the Kimono you sent me which is indeed lovely. But it shows that you have no idea of the heat in the cells. Why even the thin night gown you sent gets soaking wet in ten minutes. Nothing but nature's own dress keeps one from melting away & that I can only wear at night. But do not bother about another Kimono. I will manage without. I am glad you got the night-dress, those Kate received are too hot so I returned them. Kate is indeed a wonderful mother. Her children are so self-reliant that the twins, only 10½ years old came down alone to visit her, then did her shopping in town & then went back alone. A City detective took them for runaway boys. But they soon informed him who they were so he treated them to dinner instead. As to Kathleen, she has traveled alone since she was a wee baby. Some record for Kate isn't it. She laughed herself when I told her that my rebellious niece of yesterday now approves of the conservative ruling of Meta L not to let Kathleen travel alone - my niece who at the age of Kathleen was ready to travel alone to the end of the world. Yes, we both had a good laugh at your conservatism. You must be growing old Stella darling. I too was terribly shocked to learn of Edith's death. Poor, poor Edith. I fear advanced ideas but increased the misery in her life. She was so promising - and has done so little. I wonder did she do much worth-while writing the last few years, since she dropped out of everything. Poor Edith always had a bad heart that must have brought about the end so

quickly. The only one of her middle class friends who will mourn her deeply will be Lucrece Cox. Haven't heard from the latter in years. It is terribly sad about Edith. F writes that our beloved Teddy now boasts of his "strong heart." I am so glad, so glad it was strong enough to pull him through. To lose him would have been about the last straw in the tragedies which have come to us the last 2 years. I hope T will join you soon & that he will rest & loaf & invite his soul. One needs to get acquainted with oneself & those we love. And poor people can do that only when they are physically compelled to rest. My deep love to Teddy & kisses for our sunbeam. I don't like the snapshots of the Kid because he looks so conventional, all his other pictures make him look so free and easy and beautiful, so unlike other children. Not so the snapshots speaking of children - Aline sent me a wonderful Photo of her wonderful little girl. She looks most remarkable. Aline wrote the child is the most perfect thing come into her life. I am so glad for Aline. I am most concerned about Bob M. Am writing H W about the matter. He has a brilliant idea which if it will not work will at least get much publicity for Bob's case. He will write you no doubt. As to my Essays being quoted before the investigating Committee. My life's work so no now complete. I am even reaching the dullest of all bodies. Dearest mine, the temptation of seeing your precious face when I step out of this house of the damned is so great that I have not the heart to protest against the extravagance of your trip out here, you see how weak even your E G is. If you do come, it will be necessary to do so a week in advance as I shall want you to stop off in St L to see Johnson of the Post Dispatch & R as well as our comrades. Great minds travel in the same direction - see the conceit? I wrote you about my black dress, just the time you wrote me. Our dear big hearted little Benie will provide me with the collars. I had an unexpected visit from him on Monday. It was a treat I can tell you, though we had only an hour. He then went out & brought up half of Asel's store. Ben is simply wonderful. Oh, yes, I got a box of all sorts of things from our old friend Leon Malmed 121 S. Pearl St Albany. Write him please, send my affectionate greetings & thanks. Enclosed are samples of dress & cape material Sarah got. Big Ben gave her the money for the dress silk. I don't know where she got the cash for the cape, she paid \$750 a yard & bought 3½ yards besides the lining. I don't know why she wants so much. She has to get both the dress & cape ready within the next two weeks as she is selling her Tailor shop. Isn't the good for the cape beautiful? And the dress silk. Just what I want. Both will be worth a fortune when made up. I had Ella write Sarah that the lining may make the cape too heavy. But on second thought it occurs to me that I will need it warm for travel, so you better write Sarah to line it. I have so many things I want to write you, but my space is up. Ella now has three writing privileges a week and as she has few people to write to, she will write you for me once a week, so you will really get 2 letters from here instead of one. Write our Canadian friend his letter & enclosure arrived. Write M F Shields 505 Masonic Building Los Angeles Calif. Box of oranges arrived in good condition, was fine birthday gift. Kindest greetings & thanks. I heard from Rudin. Will write him soon.

Bushels of love to you.
E.

ALI, Emma Goldman Archive, ISSH. This letter was published in the August 1919 issue of *Freedom*(New York), along with a letter by AB to M. E. Fitzgerald.
(In EG's prison letters she had only two sheets of paper and in an effort to save space, did not use paragraphs or other breaks.)