

My beloved Margery, I pray you eternally stay in good health. I hope my faltering presence has not hurt you as much as it has hurt me. My heart weighs heavier with each passing moment that goes by without your loving appearance. I find myself yearning to peer into your eyes, for my world is all but peaceful without them. Thus, whenever I receive your writing, the increasing weight of your unfortunate absence begins to slow, for I feel you in proximity. It is your writing which allows me the willpower to stay hopeful, for I anticipate your swift arrival in a foreseeable future.

As for the matter of the settlement, I implore you not to take concern. Please, have your mother be made aware that my affection for you has always been independent of any economic incentive. I wish not to create further rifts between your mother and father, for it will instill in you immense feelings of sadness; it is your happiness which aids me in staying sane. The matter of the settlement is also not deeply important, for we are blessed with abundant reserves, and I am confident of your unwavering love for me, with or without some monetary commitment. I will have you know then, to your surprise, that my family wishes for your prompt arrival. Nevertheless, if any other decision counter to my wishes were to have been made, I would still never forsake your happiness, and in turn, my own.

With this important matter having been addressed, I desperately await your presence. I find myself pondering upon our future together and wish to be made aware of your thoughts. I intend to purchase a dwelling for us to live when we marry. I wish for you to be made, God-willingly, as comfortable as possible. I have hence come to the decision of a generously spacious

dwelling by the plains, near to London by horse-back. I also intend to have in this home an oval-shaped opulent mirror in each room, for I wish to frequently remind you of the immense beauty you harbor. The request I have of you, then, is to promptly make me aware of other important aspects you would wish to see in your future home. Be aware, however, that the idea of the mirrors is not open to any sort of conversation whatsoever!

Whenever I ponder upon those beautiful moments between us which will soon ensue, I chastise myself, for thinking in such ways is immature. Yet, my love, I cannot stop, for your sweetness is most desired. Were you to simply be nothing greater than a peasant with half the wealth you possess now, as you mention, you would still be the only woman present in my vicinity. If then, for any god-forsaken reasoning, you find my passionate commitment to you untruthful and unfaithful, I must insist you are terribly mistaken. Without you, my will to perform my duties in life will soon waver. I will keep your letter in the chestnut drawer to the right of where I sleep, the key to which only I possess. I will read your words every morning as I arise.

While I could write pages expressing my love for you, it would take me weeks, if not years. I yearn for a prompt response from you, and I hence choose to end my writing here. I implore you to take splendid care of yourself, for I wish for you to be happy. I pray that this letter reaches you in good form, untouched by eyes that are not yours.

Eternally yours,

Your beloved Valentine, John Paston