

Thomas More's Letter to His Wife -- Modernized

Woodstock
3 September 1529

Lady Alice, in my most hearty way, I commend me to you.

And as I am informed by our son Heron of the loss of our barns and our neighbors' also with all the corn that was in them, except if it were not God's pleasure, it would be a great pity that so much good corn was lost. Yet since it has pleased him to send us such a chance, we must, and are bound, not only to be content, but also to be glad of his visitation. He sent us all that we have lost, and since he has by such a chance taken it away again, his pleasure be fulfilled; let us never grudge at it, but take it in good worth, and heartily thank him as well for adversity as for prosperity.

And perhaps we have more cause to thank him for our loss than for our winning, for his wisdom better sees what is good for us than we do ourselves. Therefore, I pray you, be of good cheer and take all the household with you to church; and there thank God both for what he has given us, and for what he has taken from us, and for what he has left us, which if it please him, he can increase when he will, and if it please him to leave us yet less, at his pleasure so be it.

I pray you to make some good inquiry into what my poor neighbors have lost, and bid them take no thought of it for, even if I should not leave myself a spoon, there shall be no poor neighbor of mine who bears any loss because of an accident that happened in my house.

I pray you, be merry in God with my children and your household, and consider with your friends what way would be the best to make provision for corn for our household, and for seed this year coming. If you think it good whether we keep the land still in our hands or not, yet I think it would not be best, suddenly thus, to give it all up and to put away our folk off our farm till we have received advice on that; however, if we have more servants now than you shall need, and who can get themselves other masters, you may then discharge them, but I would not that any man were suddenly sent away he knows not where.

At my coming here, I thought it necessary that I should remain with the King's Grace, but now I shall, I think, because of this accident get leave this next week to come home and see you, and then we shall further consider together all things about what steps shall be best to take.

And thus, as heartfelt as you can wish, farewell to you with all our children. At Woodstock the third day of September by the hand of

Your loving husband,

Thomas More

¹ The original non-modernized version of this letter can be found in *St. Thomas More: Selected*

Letters , edited by Elizabeth Rogers, Yale UP, 1961, pages 170-171. Modernization copyright CTMS.