From: Alice Dunbar
Brooklyn, New York

To: Paul Laurence Dunbar
Washington, D.C.

(1)

[Mar. 22, 1895]

Tuesday.

Paul, I do not blame you one bit for writing such a letter as you did - only dear, I am your wife now, and you must throw things in my face about Dr. Tobin's estrangement and your mother's disappointment. There is a friend whom I have more than estranged; only I have done nothing about it, and mama and sister's disappointment and sorrow, I cannot weigh nothing?

2-4-11

(2)

Let us not speak of these things again; it is not wise, just or generous.

Now I have a plan to submit to you; Suppose I resign on Apl 1. and you come after me on the 6th? That is short enough, goodness knows!

Now wait before you jubilate. Our March salaries will not be paid us until May 15th or June 1. But I'll need that money so I want to give you my warrant, which can be collected and paid you when it is due. You

(3)

~~you~~ See I vowed to myself that I wouldn't ask you for a cent until I went home, and I'm not doing it. I only want to enter into a cold business transaction with you. You send me an order now for ~~my~~ $60.00 the sum of my Mich. salary, and I'll send an order to the Secretary here to pay my check to you. See?

And you'll have to come after me - leaving Saturday night - and we leave Sun. evening - cause I'd never have courage to go alone.

(4)

That won't be so expensive - not as bad as a wedding.

—

Later.

I stopped here and went out. Now that I return another thought comes to me - why not make my going down Easter. Its only four days later, you know.

I have not heard from the home folks. I presume they are too mad to write.

The one person whom I dread above all others to face is Mr. Scottron. He is the one who placed me in the schools here

"If it had not been for you – thus and so." I have considered it pretty bad taste to speak of lost opportunities, freinds, position &c. but if you want – I can but am not. I haven't felt that way yet – don't, dont make me, for I suppose the me idea business is a family taint. I never would get over it, never be contented again.

Paul, don't quarrel with me. I cant quarrel and make up and be the same. Something in me dies everytime I have to speak coarsely to anyone. I am ridiculously

and advanced me so continually. He had planned a friendship for me – and I know how disappointed and disgusted he will be.

But, dear heart, you have thoroughly frightened me about going home. When you write me such letters throwing a lot of blame and reproach at me, I tremble to think if in all our life together you are to wash my face always with – "you forced the marriage."

2-4-12

tender-hearted and sensitive. Slight words and looks hurt me for days, though I may apparently laugh it away. Won't you try to remember this dear, and not be sarcastic or cross with me. Those who love me have always spoken tenderly to me and I am afraid I am too old to learn to become accustomed to any other treatment. Sister holds a higher place in my affections than mama ever did because she never spoke a harsh word to me in her life.

Such is the queer make-up of an apparently leather souled creature.

What a perfect mental purgatory I have passed through during the past two weeks only God and I can know. Doubts and dreams, hopes and fears, cringings and aspirations, love and questionings, everything chaotic has possessed my soul. Those with anxieties about finance — for we haven't been paid for Feb. yet; worries about my physical condition, an unusual strain in the school work and a deeper worry about Medford opinion than I'd even confess to myself; a vivid wonder how

on earth I could ever get ready for my new life, a fearsome regret for having hampered you fearfully— what a torture!. Dolores says she wonders I am not a gibbering idiot or a raving maniac.

Then I copied that entire book of hers, making two copies, type-written— neat— since Mch 6, as it had to be ready for the publishers by March. 18. and have been doing my usual two lectures

2-4-13

a day &c. So don't blame me if I am a bit incoherent: I feel actually light-headed at times.

Paul, dear, did you settle that matter with Bishop D.? You know I'd like to have that bona-fide certificate, and he has not sent it to me yet.

About my matters now. I will have quite a few things from here, books &c. When I send them it will be by freight. Then in Medford is my book-case, about two-hundred more books— have about 100 here— my 'cello and two pictures. If the folks write me

(10)

I'll order them sent also by freight - much cheaper, you know.

Then for announcement cards - I want about 300 for myself - to go to N.O. and Boston only. You'll attend to the Wash. end. No "at home" cards. Simply our two visiting cards - or mine. Which means that I wish you'd have me a plate engraved at once with 100 cds.

Mrs. Paul Laurence Dunbar,

Thursdays.

1938 - 4th St
Washington, D.C.

Ahem!

I'm as sick as a dog at this moment, but that is revivifying. I hope my husband is much better. With kisses and kisses.

Your wife.
Alice Dunbar