July 22, 1921. Charlestown Prison

MY DEAR MRS. GLENDOWER EVANS:

I was just thinking what I would to do for past the long days jail: I was saying to myself: Do some work. But what? Write. A gentle motherly figure came to my mind and I rehear the voice: Why don't you write something now? It will be useful to you when you will be free. Just at that time I received your letter. Thanks to you from the bottom of my heart for your confidence in my innocence; I am so. I did not spittel a drop of blood, or steal a cent in all my life. A little knowledge of the past; a sorrowful experience of the life itself had gave to me some ideas very different from those of many other umane beings. But I wish to convince my fellowman that only with virtue and honesty is possible for us to find a little happiness in the world. I preached: I worked. I wished with all my faculties
that the social wealth would belong to every umane creatures, so well as it was the fruit of the work of all. But this do not mean robbery for a insurrection. The insurrection, the great movements of the soul, do not need dollars. It need love, light, spirit of sacrifice, ideas, conscience, instincts. It need more conscience, more hope and more goodness. And all this blessed things can be seeded, awoked, grewed up in the heart of man in many ways, but not by robbery and murder for robbery.

I like you to know that I think of Italy, so speaking. From the universal family, turning to this humble son, I will say that, as far as my needs, wish and aspirations call, I do not need to become a bandit. I like the teaching of Tolstoi, Saint Francesco and Dante. I like the example of Cincinnati and Garibaldi. The epicurean joi do not like to me. A little roof, a field, a few books and food is all what I need. I do not care for money, for leisure, for mondane ambition. And honest, even in this world of lambs and wolves I can have those things. My father has many field, houses, garden. He deal in wine and fruits and granaries. He wrote to me many times to come back home, and be a business man. Well, this supposed murderer had answered to him that my conscience do not permit to me to be a business man and I will gain my bread by work his field.

And more: The clearness of mind, the peace of the conscience, the determination and force of will, the intelligence, all, all what make the man feeling to be a part of the life, force and intelligence of the universe, will be brake by a crime. I know that, I see that, I tell that to everybody: Do not violate the law of nature, if you do not want to be a miserable. I remember: it was a night without moon, but starry. I sit alone in the darkness, I was sorry, very sorry. With the face in my hands I began to look at the stars. I feel that my soul want goes away from my body, and I have had to make an effort to keep it in my chest. So, I am the son of Nature, and I am so rich that I do not need any money. And for, this they say I am a murderer and condemned me to death. Death? It is nothing. Abominium is cruel thing. Now you advise me to study. Yes, it would be a good thing. But I do not know enough this language to be able to make any study through it. I will like to read Longfellow's, Paine's, Franklin's and Jefferson's works, but I cannot. I would like to study mathematics, physics, history and science, but I have not a sufficient elementary school to begin such studies, especially the two first and I cannot study
without work, hard physical work, sunshine and winds; free, blessing wind. There is no flame without the atmospheric gases; and no light of genius in any soul without they communion with Mother Nature.

I hope to see you very soon; I will tell you more in the matter. I will write something, a meditation perhaps and name it: Waiting for the Hanger. I have lost the confidence in the justice of man. I mean in I what is called so; not of course, of that sentiment which lay in the heart of man, and that no infernal force will be strong enough to soffocate it. Your assistance and the assistance of so many good men and women, had made my cross much more light. I will not forget it. I beg your pardon for such a long letter, but I feel reminiscent to you that hundred pages would not be sufficient to extern my sentiments and feelings. I am sure you will excuse me. Salve.

[Mrs. Elizabeth Glendower Evans was a supporter of Sacco’s and Vanzetti’s who was long convinced of their innocence.]

May 6, 1923. Charlestown Prison

DEAR COMRADE HILLSMITH:

The reasons for my delay are many; but the principle ones are two. I expected to go to the court the 30th of April, and consequently, I have worked much in collaboration of our abdomadari [the weekly newspaper L’Adunata dei Refrattari], which, I am glad to say, acquire continually more readers, and steadily grows better and better. The second, and more serious reason is, that your two letters are very contradictory to and against my personal opinions, beliefs, criterion and principles. They have provoked my Italian and my partizan impulses—my passion. So I decided to wait for calm and serenity before to answer. The price to perfection is high, sorrowful. I suffered more in making my conscience, than in facing my trial. I am a bitter polemist, a merciless theorist, and I know to cause to others much anguish. With my letters upon "Syndicalism," I am actually causing sorrow to many. The same comrade to whom these letters are dedicated, has written to me, "Your opinions upon the syndicalism are unjust." But he does not produce a single fact or reason in behalf of his affirmation; while one of the most intelligent and learned comrades in his article, "What shall we expect from another Anarchist Congress," has shown many facts that prove the veridicity of my assertion; he has said also what I intend to say in my 4th and conclusive letter on the topic.
Undoubtedly, the words that I am writing will disturb you, will cause your heart to ache. But, would you prefer my insincerity to my sincerity? To be sincere is not only my duty toward myself, my fellowman, and my Cause, but it is also the only way that I have to not repay your love, benefits, and sincerity with deceiveness and villany.

Of course, we Anarchists are so because we differ in opinions from all the other humans who are not Anarchists. All the enemies of the workers and of the human emancipation, when they speak to masses in order to vilify us, and keep the workers under exploitation of the capitalists, they tell the masses not to let the handed false doctrine influence their mind. The deceit of bad shepherds among the workers, and the ignorance of the masses, has induced many sincerely but inexperienced friends of the workers to believe that we, proletarian vanguard of the Revolution, are mystified by false mirages and doctrines inoculated to our mind by the ill-intentioned propaganda of more educated rascals, propaganda blindly accepted. In verity, among us, those who blindly accept the propaganda does not exist. Why? Because we Anarchists; we, Peter Kropotkin, M. Bakunin, E. Reclus, L. Galleani, P. Gori, E. Malatesta, have been born in Prince's palaces, or in good mansions, and grown up in the Imperial Court, have been educated in the best colleges; we thought the same things that our enemies of the same social conditions thought; we have believed in the same things, acted the same acts. And we humble worker Anarchists have been grown up without the confortation of the school, in poor houses, over working and suffering from the birth day on, we have done and believed as our enemy workers have done, believed and lived. We were as our enemies and adversaries are. Only by an incessant mental work, a long and terrible trial of conscience, we became different, as now we are. That is, we have analyzed, condemned, repudiated all conceptions, beliefs, the criterions and the principles that were inculcated in us from our infancy until the day of the beginning of our conviction.

I also believe that man has the faculty of reasoning, but that he can only exercise it upon what he can perceive, and by the way that he perceives. One cannot think in a language ignored by him. This is the cause of all the errors.

Now, I will begin to expose my divergent conviction upon your opinions. I have read the Bible and recognize some merits, but I believe wholly irrational to base
upon it our works and hopes. I not only disagree from the global view and criterions of your letters, but it seems to me that they are self-contradictory, and that many natural and social phenomena are entirely left apart by you, also incomplete and wrong.

This is why I decided not to enter into a discussion before these explanatory words, and the answer of the following questions: Are you contrary or in favor of the Anarchistic view and aim?--of a real physical equality in ownership, in rights and duties among the human beings? Did you mean to possess, relatively and humanly speaking, the whole truth and reason? If it would that humans should be compelled to the violence either for justice or for injustice, then would you approve those who would use the violence against the violence that compel them to be unjust and violent? Did you ever study Kropotkin, Reclus, Bakunin, Proudhon, or Tolstoy and compare their doctrines with those of liberals or authoritative Socialists?

[Comrade Hillsmith refers to Mrs. Elsie Hillsmith, a supporter of Sacco’s and Vanzetti’s. Peter Kropotkin, M. Bakunin, E. Reclus, L. Galleani, P. Gori, E. Malatesta, Proudhon, and Tolstoy were all socialist and/or anarchist writers of the day.]

Winter, 1923. Charlestown Prison

MY DEAR FRIEND MRS. EVANS:

Yesterday I wrote practically all the day long and finished the novel. My other teacher, Mrs. V. M. M., has criticize a little my "pedantic way of writing." I told her that it is not due to pretentions of any sort, but simply and purely by my "blessing ignorance of the English language." Now I wish to finish a treatise on "Syndicates and Syndicalism," in Italian and before the hearing. I have obtained the promotion to work in the yard, and already feel much better.

This evening I have received a letter from our great sublime E.Debs. I am touched by his goodness and greatness. Proud, even if little ashamed of his friendship, appreciation and praises.

I am feeling better and better, and I wish and hope that this letter will find you in the best of conditions.

February 27, 1924. Charlestown Prison

DEAR COMRADE BLACKWELL:

Yours of the 23rd has reached me. You are right. Neither do I expect any good
from that letter to the judge. I have never expected, nor do I expect anything from him, other than some ten thousand volts divided in few times; some meters of cheap board and 4x7x8 feet hole in the ground.

No matter how much sympathy I try to bestow upon him, or with how much understanding I try to judge his actions; I only and alone can see him a self-conceited narrow-minded little tyrant, believing himself to be just, and believing his utterly unjust and unnecessary social office to be a necessity and a good. He is a bigot, and therefore, cruel. At the time of our arrest and trials, his peers were seeing red all around, and he saw red more than his peers. He was ready to kill us even before the trials, for he deadly hates the subversive, and he believed to have become judge of the State Supreme Court by eliminating us via Law. For he knows that the servants of Capital were always remunerated by the Bosses for a crusifixion of some rebel or lover.

I do not know if his conduct during the trial was determined by his preconceptions, hate and ignorance, or if he consciously murdered us by details of bad faith, double playing, simulation, etc. I know that he did it. I know that even now he does not want to give us another trial though he could not deny it. And this is why he delays so much to give the answer.... And if I am wrong, if according to his own standard, he is fair; if he wishes to be just, ('til now he is very unjust) then he could be hurt by my letter, but also enlightened. And if he would not forgive the crude defense of a man extremely wronged, then, not even a sparrow would I submit to him as arbiter.

An almost centenial struggle against every form of exploitation, oppression and fraud, taught us that "the wolf eats him who makes himself a sheep."

I am not sure, but I believe, that there are no pamphlets in Italian language, which treat with detail the case. This is the second reason of my letter and the 3rd reason is, my wish to say what no one else can say--silence would be cowardness--and treat the case accordingly to my own criterions. This may hurt me, but will help the Cause. Otherwise, if it means a life sentence, I prefer to be burnt away once and for all, and I also know that those in height, upon the back and the heads of the slaves, are against me....

There is no spirit of sacrifice in this deed. I simply realize to be in merciless hands, and do my utmost to say to my enemy that he is wrong. In a way that helps the
cause. The great one, not the small. My only hope remains in the solidariety of friends and comrades and of the workers. After having spent $200,000, we are still at the beginning. The work of the lawyers are useless before the law. It has helped only because they brought the fact to the conscience and consciousness of the People. That is why Nick and I were not yet roasted. Authority, Power, and Privilege would not last a day upon the face of the earth, were it not because those who possess them, and those who prostitute their arms to their defense do suppress, repress, mercilessly and inescapable every efforts of liberations of each and all the rebels.

I abhor useless violence. I would my blood to prevent the sheading of blood, but neither the abyss nor the earth, nor the heavens, have a law which condemns the self-defense. Not every woman has sacrificed to bring forth one more rufian, idiot, or coward to the world. There are yet some men. And if tragedy is compelled to us, who knows; who knows if to speak now is not my duty? The champion of life and of the liberty should not yield before the death. The struggle for the liberty, between the oppressor and the oppressed, shall continue beyond the life, beyond the graves. I know what they have done and are doing to me and to thousands of others, rebels and lovers. And I know that they are and will always be ready to do against us. I know the millions of youth that they slandered, the virgins that they have tom in the breast; the millions of wives that they have widowed; the millions of bastards that they let to miasma of the gutter, or grown to the fratricide. I know the old fathers and mothers whom they killed by breaking their hearts; and all the children that they starved and are starving to death; and the hospitals and the crazy-houses filled of their victims, and the little criminals, victims, irresponsible and semi-compelled to crime that they mercilessly executed or entombed alive. They have never had pity for our children, our women, our dear, poor old fathers and mothers--and they never will have it.

The sorrow of their victims torture me in blood and spirit. As for me, I would forgive them, but I could not, for I would be a traitor of the race. Until not a man will be exploited or oppressed by another man, we will never bend the banner of freedom. Are they not ready to do with other comrades what they are doing to us? Are they not more willing than ever to squeeze out the worker's blood for more gold? Are they not preparing a greater war?
I will ask for revenge--I will tell that I will die gladly by the hands of the hanger after having known to have been vindicated. I mean "eye for an eye, ear for an ear," and even more since to win it is necessary that 100 enemies fall to each of us. The only vengence which could placate me is the realization of freedom, the great deliverance which would beneficiate all my friends as well as all my enemies: All. But till that, the struggle goes on, till we are breath to breath with the enemy fighting with short arms, till then, to fight is our duty, our right, our necessity. For, one of the two. Either we must go on and win, or we must ask for an armistice. And who will grant it to us? Since the enemy has no scruples nor pity, to ask pity of him is to encourage him to slander our fellows, to try to grant to him the immunity for his crimes against us; it would be as a matricide. The more I live, the more I suffer, the more I learn, the more I am inclined to forgive, to be generous, and that the violence as such does not resolve the problem of life. And the more I love and learn that "the right of all to violence does not go together with the liberty, but that it begins when the liberty ends." The slave has the right and duty to arise against his master. My supreme aim, that of the Anarchist is, "the complete elimination of violence from the rapports (relations)."

To be possible, we must have freedom and justice. Now we have the opposite of them, because through errors and consequent aberations, men have risen as tyrants, deceivers and exploiters of other men, believing to gain their personal, familiar and cast welfare by such deed. Through both tyranny and servitude, we have lost our capacity of liberty and we are making life evermore miserable, operating our own ante-distruction. Since "only the liberty, or the struggle for liberty, may be school of liberty" and since mine is but self and racial defense, why should not I use the truth to defend myself? It is supremely sweet to me--my consciousness of superiority, of righteousness, to know that I can judge and that the future shall bow to me, the doomed, and curse my judges. Well, I have said many things which I sincerely believe to be so. But there are surely some mistake! Who possesses the absolute, or even the absolute--relative truth? So your point of view may be right, and I also realized that you spoke exclusively for my own good.

Wisdom is not only comprehension, but also many other faculties together; among which discrimination and sense of measure are prominent. I will try to be wise !!!!!!
I will think it over and over again. 
This month I have had no visits, a little mail, and waited in vain for Mr. Moore and company, Mrs. Evans and Mrs. V. MacMechan....
Altogether, sometime, in my solitude, I think that the world is gradually forgetting this son of it, entombed alive. But, I will bear my cross. There are those who will never forget me....
P.S. I began to study arithmetic, and I find that my mind works in the same way. A Mathematic mind then? I asked it since I wonder that during 36 years no one else had perceived it, and the one who did it, fear to [do] me wrong.

December, 1924. Charlestown Prison

DEAR MRS. EVANS:
For the water in liquid state, freedom is, to flow from a relative up to a relative down; or vise versa when the water is in vapor state. For the fire, freedom is, to expand and to arise. In short, freedom is, for each and all the things of the universe, to follows their natural tendencies--and to fulfill their own virtues, qualities and capacities. This,--and not at all an abstraction, nor an abstract right which enable someone to say of a man, dead for want of food, that he has not die of starvation, but for not having exercised his right and his freedom to eat--is my idea of liberty. Please, permit me to prove you the trueness of this true conception of freedom by applying it to Nick and myself. Am I without a lover? Yes, but I would like to have a lover. Have I not, by nature, the instinct, the faculties and, therefore, the right of love? Of course yes, but it would be better if not, for having them but not the freedom to realize them, it all become an excruciable laughing stock.
Has Nick a wife? Yes, and a good one; but not being free, he must either thinks that she is consoling herself with somebody else, or that she is suffering the unspeakable agony of a loving woman compelled to mourn a living lover.
Have I no children? Well--I would like to have or to generate some children. Have Nick some children--yes, and what his heart experiences when he thinks of them--is a thing known by him alone.
O the blessing green of the wilderness and of the open land--O the blue vastness of the oceans--the fragrances of the flowers and the sweetness of the fruits--The sky reflecting lakes--the singing torrents-the telling brooks--O the valleys, the hills--the
awful Alps! O the mistic dawn--the roses of the aurora, the glory of the moon--O
the sunset--the twilight--O the supreme extasies and mystery of the starry night,
heavenly creature of the eternity.
Yes, Yes, all this is real actuality but not to us, not to us chained--and just and
simply because we, being chained, have not the freedom to use our natural faculty
of locomotion to carry us from our cells to the open horizon--under the sun at
daytime--under the visible stars at night.
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**Chronology :**

**February 10, 2017 :** Letters written in 1921-24 in Charlestown

**April 14, 2019 :** Letters written in 1921-24 in Charlestown State

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