

Dear *sweet Elizabeth*

I miss you and home so much, and I wish I had never embarked on this great journey, even though it's in the name of God, to reclaim the great city of Jerusalem. We have faced many perils so far, such as money, illness, and the lack of food and water. I hate to say this, but I doubt I will make it back alive. Our noble steed, *Red Rum*, is weak from lack of water, and having to carry my heavy armour. I can relate to both situations. Even just wearing the armour, it is a worse pain than carrying two sacks of sand, even maybe three, all on your back, day in and day out. I can't imagine the pain the horse must be feeling. My water reserve is painstakingly low, I simply don't have enough to enable the horse to drink, and with me having barely any money to buy food with, I must hydrate myself in other ways. I dread to say it, but I have stooped so low as to drink my own urine. Many others have had the same idea, and it has not ended well for most. If you're lucky, you would catch a horrible disease. If you were unlucky, however, you would simply die. I shudder to think of such a horrid fate. The whole journey is exhausting, constant marching on horseback, with barely any time to sleep.

The journey has been horrid, crossing Italy, France and Turkey, all of which put forth seemingly - impossible obstacles in our path. In France, the food and drink was horribly over-priced, in Italy the mountains were treacherous to climb, many a brave soul losing his life over thin and crumbling mountain passageways over gaping ravines, and in Turkey the deserts were nothing like I'd ever seen before, with horrible heat, boiling some men alive in their armour, and the sand and whipped your eyes and bare skin, and when a 'sand storm' occurred, it halted our progress for hours, sometimes many days.

If I do not return, I am so sorry, and I hope you find a way to carry on without me. I feel the beginnings of a stomach pain, and I am worried I may have caught the disease from my fellow comrades. I only did it for the promise of wealth, I don't have an inch of Christianity in me. So just know I love you, and I am sorry I ever even considered embarking on this terrible crusade.

John