July 21, 1861

Dear Emma,

Today was the battle of the Bull Run. It was in Manassas, Virginia. The war has kept going on and on. Today’s battle was very rough. The union and the confederates fought a tough battle. The casualties today were up to 3,000. I hear the confederates aren’t doing to well so far and I hope that this rate will continue on and it will be and easy battle for us. I hope that our fathers are still alive and well. I know that whatever happens to them, they only want the best for us. I miss you! I miss playing in the yards at our yards. The war has brought us farther and farther apart. I don’t even know where you are, or what has happened to you.

I don’t know if your family is doing okay or if some died. I would hope that they are alive and you have your mother, father, and brother doing well. As I hope that this war ends, I hope that the union can win already so that things come back to normal. Our fathers can come home, and I hear your brother just was recently added into the war also. I want you to know my family says hello, and hopes that everyone is all right in your home for everyone here is doing just fine. I hope this letter gets to you I hope that you contact me back. I need to hear from you.

Your best friend,

Leah

April 6, 1862

Dear Emma,

I’m so glad to hear from you! I’m happy your alive and doing well, with your family! I’m so sorry about your brother, I know times are rough right now but they will get better as time goes on. Today was the battle of Shiloh. More and more people died today. Hopefully your father, as well as mine, are still trekking on and helping win this battle~ I hope your father is still alive, for that would be a tragedy if he were to die. With your brother being dead and all, that would be a terrible thing. I know how much your father means to you, and how many good memories you have had with him. Have you heard from lately? Gotten any letters in the mail from him?

I get letters from my father every day, well most every day. Well, anyways, this war is in Tennessee this time. Far from home, I know. I miss him every day, and I know you miss your brother and your father too. I miss my brother, he lives far from home, I cant imagine him dead though. I feel terrible for you, and I wish only the best for your family. How is your mother? I imagine she is very sad, for the loss of your brother. I heard she’s super sick. What kind of disease is it? I know that a lot of diseases are spreading around. They are making us wear masks anywhere we go. It makes me sad, and sort of scared. I really hope that none of us get the disease, because that would be really bad. I really hope your mother gets better, your father writes back, and your brother rests in peace.

Write me back, Leah

June 27, 1862

Dearest Emma,

Another battle has come to place and I am deeply and truly sorry about the losses that you have had. I cannot believe that your mother died also! I cannot believe that she got an unknown disease and they could not cure it. I have high hopes that you will someday find a cure and that your dreams to come true to be a doctor. Your mother was like a second mother to me. I am deeply saddened by her death. You have nobody left. This is going to bring us farther apart for you will have to go stay with your aunt and uncle. People are missing and injured. Some have even died. But thankfully we got a letter from father and he is still alive and well.

Except he has some disease, the doctor hasn’t figured it out yet, he might have to have a leg taken off. Im really scared that my father isn’t going to make it much longer. I really hope that he can keep going, because I don’t want him to die. I’m sure that your father will keep going on and on. He’s a strong man, and he will keep fighting for us, to win. He will help the union make a victory! I really hope I get to see you sometime soon, I really miss you, I hope that this war will end. I hope my father makes it.

Until we write again,

Leah

October 8, 1682

Dear Emma,

Another battle has occurred in the past few weeks. My father has sadly passed away and it has caused much trauma to our family. We got a letter from the Union soldiers telling us this unfortunate news. When we got the news we were in shock, we were very grief-stricken. We miss him tremendously and are having trouble getting back on our feet. My mother and siblings are equally as upset as I am but they never want to talk about it, and I am so grateful that I can share my thoughts with you. Its hard, for me even to talk about it, but I know I have to talk about it sometime. Things have changed so much, our house is now always quiet. Life as we know if was always so bright, so colorful, now with this battle going on its always sad, and drowsy.

So many people have been dying; my neighbor’s husband is in the war as well. She’s always over, for her house is not in good shape. Lots of gasses coming from cannons, she doesn’t want to expose to her brand new baby. I don’t know how she could do what she does, and still care for a baby. How would you go on with your life not knowing if your husbands coming home. It’s terrible. I imagine it’s hard for my mother. She does the same. I hope very much that your father is still alive and doing well. You deserve to have at least one person in your life. I hope you are enjoying your aunt and uncle. I hope that you make some new friends there but remember that you will always be my best friend.

Love Always, Leah

December 15, 1862

To my best friend Emma,

This will be my last letter to you. I am sad to admit that I will no longer be writing any more letters to you. The mail carrier will no longer be accepting any more mail. Please forgive me for this. Though, I am glad you are having a great time at your aunt and uncles. And I am so happy that you will never forget me. Hopefully this tragic war will soon end so that I can see you again sometime soon. With all of our losses we need to have a great time together! I hope that things go well with you, you get new friends, a new life, and so you can just start over again.

Good luck with everything that falls ahead for you. My life is becoming back to normal again, slowly. We finally moved on with our life after my father died. Things are way different, and as we move on with our life my father will never be forgotten. As well for you, I’m sure that you mother and your brother will never be forgotten also. The woman who lived in my house, my neighbor, has died since the last time I have talked to you. She left her baby with us; it was extremely saddening for us. She died from a disease, it spread throughout her body, and there was nothing to stop it. Fortunately her baby is healthy and is living well with us. It makes us happy everyday we see it. Miss you lots and please have a wonderful life. I will always think of you and miss my best friend.

With love always,

Leah