

May 5, 1848

*My dearest Brigid,*

*I cannot tell you how excited I am for your arrival here in Cleveland. Leaving you and baby Hugh behind was the hardest thing I have ever had to do, but I know that I made the right decision. Here in Cleveland I have a good job working on the docks and I have finally made enough money to send for you, Hugh, Molly, cousin Patrick and Uncle Seamus.*

*You will need time to rest and gain strength since the potato harvest has been so poor these past few years. It makes me angry when I hear about all the food being shipped out of Ireland! The Irish are dying from hunger there because there is no food. So much of the potato crop has been destroyed by blight. Once you and Molly arrive we can start finding you some work. I have been looking at advertisements in the newspaper. I think that you should be able to find some housework. However, some of the advertisements clearly say that they do not want Irish to apply. Many people here think that Irish are lazy and they do not like us because we are Catholic and they are not. Even so, there is an Irish neighborhood here by the Cuyahoga River where I have set up our home. The people here all help each other out and I am sure that they will help you find some work.*

*Please be careful on your trip, my darling, and do take care of Hugh. Those boats are not safe for a child. Read these letters to Molly so that she knows I haven't forgotten my baby sister! Perhaps when she gets here someone in the neighborhood can teach her to read.*

*Your loving husband,*

*Michael*

*Cleveland, Ohio*

May 5, 1848

Dear Uncle Seamus,

*I am so glad to hear that you all are finally coming to join me in Cleveland! I cannot believe that it has been four long years since I have seen my family. I miss you all so much. The trip across the ocean will not be easy and I am afraid we can only afford for everyone to come over in steerage. This means that you will be in a cramped living space below the deck for months. The journey could be as short as one month, but as long as three months. I pray that you have a quick trip and do not have to suffer as I did with sick people all around me through the entire journey.*

*I have spoken to some men that I work with unloading ore ships on the docks on the Cuyahoga River. They said that there is plenty of work for you and Patrick. I know he is only twelve and will be weak from the lack of food, but they will put him to work right away. He can start to earn some money to support the family and make a better life for us here in Cleveland. It is hard work, but we will at least be able to eat instead of starve in Ireland. I've set up a nice place for us all to live together in the neighborhood where most of the Irish live near the docks on the Cuyahoga River.*

*I am trusting you and Patrick to watch over Brigid, Molly and Hugh during the trip. Please be careful and protect them.*

Your nephew,

Michael

Cleveland, Ohio