Washington Heights.
April 14. 1862

Mr Harris

Dear Sir

You will perhaps be surprised and think it an intrusion in me to address you at all, but sorrow and bereavement must plead my excuse. You doubtless heard of my dear Johns sudden death, it came upon me so harrowing and unexpected that I could not for some time realize and collect myself to think at all. Now I find I am at 74 a lone being, working with Harried and out ten or twelve Pupils to pay my Board. My two dwellings are this year let, but only for what will pay the interest on the mortgages my misjudging dear

Sons incumbered my little property with; and I know not where to look for help for the present moment. Poor John died broken in heart and spirit and how I do look back and feel for his sorrows, his mortifications and rebuffs. The old house to pay one of Lockwoods claims promptly he mortgaged for 12,000 $ the interest of which becomes due on the first of May, and I know not where to get $400 to pay it. Can you help me? I have a claim upon Johns own house for 6,000 $ and the same on this of Victors but Mrs. Johns house is not yet let, and though she has entirely Johns life Insurance of 14,000 $ I do not think she will pay me anything but from the rent of the house; and Mrs Victor can not till her children are of age dispose of anything,

If you can lend me all or part of this amount I will give you security for it. I have tried to sell pictures Books or my original drawings, but my means of selling or knowing anyone are so very limited that I can not succeed. What would my dear children have felt had they known to what difficulties they brought their Mother for want of judgment and moral courage to stop!! Alas! nothing now can be done I can not sell or I would gladly. and live upon ever so little; for in a few years the interest will take all I have to support Harriet and myself. I wish I could be near you a little while to tell you some of the cruelties I experience the most painful to me is Mrs Thon saying she would take me in, but not Harriet! where is she to go?

without either father or Mother, & without money; Oh Mr Harris this is a hard world and I feel it sorely. This horrid war is partly the cause and I can have no communication with either Charleston or New Orleans — Should you not be able to help me write to me if you please and still give me your friendship and sympathy for the sake of those who are gone before me. With Kind regards to Mrs Harris believe me

Yours truly

Lucy Audubon