

Letter from Christopher Brooke, Marshalsea Prison, to Sir Thomas Egerton, 1601/1602 February 25: autograph manuscript signed, Papers of the More family of Loseley Park, Surrey. Transcription by Early Modern Manuscripts Online (EMMO). MS L.b.531, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.

leaf 1 recto

May it please your good Lordship

What myne offence is, beinge singled out by it selfe, none can better iudge then *your Honour*, whoe vnderstand what man can vnderstand, & iustly censure greater every day. And perhaps it should bee indiscreetly done, to offer to your Lordships eares (filled necessarily every houre with the complaints of the whole Realme) such circumstances, as might diminishe this poore fault of ~~myne~~ myne. Therefore I spare, yet will bee bold, my Lord, to say, that they are as many, as those *that* can bee founde out to aggravate the same. My Lord, it was inioyned, *that* I should make some submission. I haue drawen one out of my hart, & writt it with myne owne hande, & sent it to his Grace, & the Rest of the Commissioners for those causes wherein I have confessed myne offence against the Canon Lawes, & Constitucions provincially of this Realme, & have testified my sorrowe for the whole fact. What other satisfaccion I (but such an offender as I am) should make, I knowe not, but I allwayes submitt myselfe. ffor Sir George Moore (my Lord) I knew then neyther his parson nor his Estate, much lesse *that* worthy favour, in *which* (your Lordship wittnes) he standeth with *your Honour*. ffor, my Lord, if I had (as vnwise as I am) I would have chosen rather to haue vndergone for Mr Donne some other more apparant daunger. And pardon me a word for him my Lord, were it not nowe best, *that* every one, whome he any way concerns, should become his favourer or his frind, whoe wants (my good Lord) but fortunes handes & tonge to reare him vpp, & sett him out. ffor my part, my Lord, besides these other thinges I am held from the sittinge at yorke, already foure dayes since begunne, where (in my silly fortune, such as it is) my profitablest practise lies. And I protest, my Lord, *that* thereby I am indaungered to loose my mothers favoure, whome I seeme to forsake in her greatest businesses, whose favoure is the best part of my strenght & meanes of well-doinge. Wherefore my humble request vnto your Lordship is, *that* you would bee soe good Lord vnto me as to discharge me & my suerties of *that* Recognisance of 1500 1100^{lb}. That when it shall please his Grace & the Rest to deliuer me from the marshalsee, whereof I have hope I may noe longer, my Lord, bee staid from those businesses in the Cuntry, whereof I have nowe more, then yet in all my lyfe I ever had. Thus I most humbly take my leave, & betake your Lordship to Gods proteccion. This 25th of february 1601. from the marshalsee.

your Honours in all humble service

ever to bee comaunded
Christopher Bruke

leaf 1 verso

leaf 2 recto

leaf 2 verso

To the Right Honourable Sir
Thomas Egerton knight
Lord Keeper of the great
Seale of England