

ingness to accept him as a plural husband. Unlike those cases, however, here the prophet did not work through the father but approached the girl directly, after sending the father on a mission.

"What have you to Say?" Smith asked. "Nothing," Lucy replied, entirely at a loss. "How could I speak, or what could I say?"

When Smith sensed resistance, as has been seen, he generally continued teaching—asking the prospective wife to pray about the principle, promising that she would receive a witness. So it happened here. "He said, 'If you will pray sincerely for light and understanding in relation thereto, you Shall receive a testimony of the correctness of this principle.'" Lucy was horrified by polygamy and by his proposal and did not quickly gain the promised testimony. She prayed, she wrote, but not with faith. She was nearly suicidal: "tempted and tortured beyond endurance until life was not desirable. Oh that the grave would kindly receive me that I might find rest on the bosom of my dear mother." Lucy now felt intensely the absence of her parents: "Why—Why Should I be chosen from among thy daughters, Father, I am only a child in years and experience. No mother to council; no father near to tell me what to do, in this trying hour. Oh let this bitter cup pass. And thus I prayed in the agony of my soul."

These events probably took place in late 1842. Smith subsequently approached Lucy's brother William, who wrote, "In the spring of 1843, my father, being away on a mission, the Prophet asked my consent, for my sister Lucy in marriage. I replied, that if it was her choice: that if she entered into the celestial order of marriage of her own free will and choice, I had no objection."

Smith saw that Lucy was unhappy and sought another interview with her in late April. He told her that the marriage would have to be secret, but that he would acknowledge her as his wife "beyond the Rocky Mountains." He emphasized that this was not a proposal that she could accept or reject according to a romantic whim. To refuse him would bring damnation: "It is a command of God to you." Furthermore, there was a time limit: "I will give you untill to-morrow to decide this matter. If you reject this message the gate will be closed forever against you." This statement infuriated the sixteen-year-old girl: "This aroused every drop of scotch in my veins ... I felt at this moment that I was called to place myself upon the altar a liveing Sacrafice, perhaps to brook the world in disgrace and incur the displeasure and contempt of my youthful companions; all my dreams of happiness blown to the four winds, this was too much, the thought was unbearable." Like Helen Mar at the age of fourteen, Lucy thought of her peer group and of the disaster that polygamy would bring to her teenage dreams.