

**Addressed to:** Mr Joshua Johnston Writer, in Stromness present in Tolbooth

**From:** Mr Alex<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup>kay

Brother Joshua,

I rec<sup>d</sup> your lett<sup>r</sup> to your spouse & your servants (?). I traversed this town twice on Saturday and onces this day and conversed w<sup>t</sup> the most responsible people therein in order they might sign a Bond of causuary (?) for your reliefes, & still when I spoke & reason<sup>d</sup> w<sup>t</sup> yne on the porch (?) they seemed somewhat willing to sign such a bond. But still when I turned my back about I could understand they all of y<sup>m</sup> decented. So that I find upon the whole they seemed not at heart to have the least regard for your interest. And they avow the same openly (reason I know not). They seem to have a concern for the rest (?) now in confinement w<sup>t</sup> you. Therefore you must relye on (Divine Providence) and what he has left in your hands to relieve yourself. Meantime my privit opinion is you should laye by for a little while and make yourself easier until the thorn (?) is a little over and do not pand (?) your interest so soon, as I can see matters will turn better out than perhaps you imagine. Let these scoundoralls that dare not savour your interest or welfare suffer and be damn. Shall tell you more at meeting than am able to relate here. I had a long conversation w<sup>t</sup> Mr G this day, & his sckaim (?) I would let him go on w<sup>t</sup> it. It will turn to your ease and interest he (?) to be in Kirk<sup>ll</sup> tomorrow. I would advise you to have a conversation w<sup>t</sup> him upon the heads (?) & doubt not but you may agree in the end. He has got £42-1-3d from Robert Clouston (?) He expect the lick sum from others, and am sure it's the better for you how much he can get from oyrs (?). It will still diminish your share. Let them pay & be hang<sup>d</sup>. D<sup>r</sup> Joshua be advised & do not be rash studie (?) your own & your family interest as lickwise oy<sup>rs</sup> concerned.

If you can relye upon Mr Graham's honour, he told me if he could collect the whole sum from those in the xxxxx xxxxxxxx from the suspendors he should be willing to excuse them to one shilling I mean the suspendors. From the one end of town to the (?) oy<sup>r</sup> I could not find any that spake friendly in your favour safe one man.

I did not see Capt MacDia (?) nor Steameston (?). John Garson is very bussie in carry (?) the the stones. If possible shall see you in a few days & am

D<sup>r</sup> Joshua

Your affect brother in law

Alex MacKay

Stromness

10<sup>th</sup> June 1766

**P.S.** Make your own privit use of this only. I hear Mr G goes soon for Edin<sup>r</sup>