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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil
Feb 28th / 89.

My own Darling Sam,

A short letter written yesterday, will have divulged how very sore my heart was at no news for eight long days from my own pet whom I love so dearly. It was useless for me to try & hide the pain I felt at the non-arrival of the letters I was sure you had penned to your own little girl. Today's mail has restored my wounded feelings & given me another proof of the true affection you entertain for me. Your's [sic] of the 16th I perused with unmingled delight ever so often & to show you how I appreciated it, I come tonight to have a long chat with my pet. Knowing how unexpected my letter will be only adds to the pleasure I have in writing. Your little girl has taken to surprising you lately you will say, but as it gives enjoyment to both & does no harm I see no reason why I should not indulge in the

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gratification of addressing you a few lines. I am sensitive to a fault, but that is a Harwood failing so I come honestly by it. I know you will never hurt me in any way – the time you did so unintentionally was a lesson which I shall never forget. I deserved it you see though what I did was done without a thought of harm. I should have reflected & known better – it was the first time I had ever done such a thing, having always been so very particular as to get the name of being a prude: in our unguarded moment I merited the rebuke you kindly gave me & which I can safely say, will never be needed

again. Is the half brother who wrote you, the old gentleman you desire to visit when you come East? Where does he reside? You cannot accuse me of being selfish with my letters. I just dash them at you as quickly as cars can be found to ~~hurry~~ carry them to my own darling so very far away. Your last letter I know by heart, having read it over night after night not to mention the moments I always found during the day, to ponder on the loving words your pen traces to me.

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No! my pet, it is too late now to say you are a horrible fellow! nothing can ever change the love I bear you & if you require a few lessons, I will gladly give them & I thank you for the perfect faith you have in me which I shall always do my very best to deserve. I would not be disloyal, even in thought, to the one who has all the affection I could possibly give to mortal man. I am full of faults though you will persist in being blind to their existence. Such being the case, is there any doubt in my not making due allowance for those you possess? We both must give in sometimes, you know my pet. Consequently having fully made up our minds to do what is right, happiness will be sure to follow. I do not wear the bracelet because it is too handsome for day wear & we have no evenings of any kind in our quiet country place: besides, I want you to put it on my arm, if possible. I really do not beleive [sic] any one could love you more fondly or sincerely than I. You cannot fathom the depth of it, as I would not confide to paper, or attempt to express the full amount of affection you have won from me!. Suffice for me to say, that apart from the love I bear my own family, you are all in all to me. I give you proof of it in willingly leaving all who have been so dear, to go & share your far away home & endeavor to make your life a pleasant one; what more can a woman do? The heliotrope blossom is quite fragrant yet & would express in its own sweet language, how much "I love you" & what deep "devotion" your little Maye feels for her darling. Unfortunately, it is like the one who desired to send it, too tender to be

buffeted about by the cold winters storms so it had best remain where it receives such care & I will place one right over your heart, the first time I have the exquisite pleasure of resting my eyes on your dear face. When will that be? Antoine is ten, & a bright, clever boy – the uncle who was with him is [Ewen MacG_] my ~~broth~~ mother's brother. I hope you take good care of yourself & have made yourself as comfortable as possible in your bachelor's quarters: if you did not, I should regret it exceedingly.

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I always consider what you say of flirting a joke, having been too sincere to trifle with hearts. You remember my telling you so, when out riding once, do you not? I would look upon my acting in such a way as a breach of trust, where you were concerned, so would never be guilty of such a thing. Your example seems to spur the others on to matrimony, but they will wait no doubt, to see if you are really happy before committing themselves beyond recalling!. Mr. D. seems to take pleasure in repeating the good he hears of you & leads me to beleive [sic] he is prepared to take very kindly to "the fellow who is afraid of no one in the N. West." he gives me proof now & then that since I have found a lover so devoted, there must be something lovable about me, which he failed to discover. Consequently, treats me rather better, though he still is "Mr. D." & kept at arms length. I cannot see how being acquainted with me made you better – later, you will initiate me, will you not? Of course, you have all I can give, when you possess my heart & I am pleased to know you value it at its full price.

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Some men think such a thing not worth the trouble of keeping, unless framed with gold. That is all they look for.. Every throb of my heart is true to my own love, who is so far away & who occupies my thoughts constantly!. does it really require a great deal to make your heart throb? mine thumps

pretty hard, when I think of my old darling, but that severe word takes all the romance out of it, you will think. I fancied you might not have been fireproof when in the Kootenay, as eyes must have been sweetly turned towards the stern commander sometimes, & who can resist the flash of a bright, dark eye? Were you nearer dear, I should not be compelled to write about so many things, but not knowing what you might have bought if there was an auction at Cpt. Neale's I ventured to express my opinion knowing you are man enough to take it the way it was meant & that you wish to please me as much as possible, in the furnishing of our little home. Lex may have understood, but should have made no remark about my way of acting, which was what

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I should have allowed any one to see – at least, so I considered. Why do you still think Mrs. Mac's love different from mine? do you not beleive [sic] her capable of any sacrifice for his sake? I do not wish to spoil you, my pet, love never did harm anyone, when returned in the right way: wishing for so much love, I judge others by myself & give it to you as I desire to have it. Very few of my friends, in fact [none] have met you, so it is hearing others speak so well of you, that they think so much of you. I told you in one of my letters written it seems to me so long ago, that the influenza lasted a short time only. I invariably get a severe cold for the last few years every winter, but have been fortunate enough to escape so far. The one I mentioned not being accompanied by a cough worth talking of. You may find sufficient music in your voice to join me in a song now & then – at least, must try, my pet, to please me. I want the large room to be on the side of Mrs. Mac's home in order to have the benefit of the rising sun. I detest dull rooms & love sun & light. The small rooms to be next the single officer's – I thought I had told you, but was not certain. I think the other explanations are all right, but the ceilings being lower, makes a slight difference – it cannot be helped & with the rest altered to suit my fastidious taste, I will be content. I noticed

that it seemed lower, but attributed it to my vivid imagination! We will be quite grand when we go driving with the [furs?] in hand – I wonder if you will find me as agreeable a companion driving as riding!!!..I thought the turnout you mention was Capt. Neale's private property. Never mind the writing pet – it is never illegible for the eye, of love, so do not worry over it, but write often. You keep saying Mrs. Mac longs to see me soon – so do you, my pet, though you will not trust yourself to whisper it, ever so low. Cheer up, my own love the time is going on steadily & truly. My dear Mamma began to speak of my going, of this time next year, the other evening & began to weep – needless to tell you I joined in. I never thought they really loved me as much as they do & do you wonder that it sometimes makes me heart sore, when I reflect on the deep love which calls me to you, & that the old love, which

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which was blessed & hightened [sic] my whole life, clings to those who have done so much for me!...My pet, it is rather late, so I beleive [sic] I will leave you . Good night pleasant dreams – March 1st – Your dear letter written on the 18th has just come to me & caused my heart to beat far more quickly than it is accustomed to – how I love you pet, for your nice, kind expressions of love & trust, for one so unworthy! – Your last letter was perfectly well understood & every word well weighted & pondered over, so do not imagine I failed to comprehend every word written by my own love. Mrs. Macleod is very nice to speak kindly of me & will I trust not be disappointed when she knows me more intimately. How I used to look around for you when we went out driving, though you imagine I did not deign to do so. Surely it is time for all doubt to be over & our hearts at peace, but the letter I wrote on Sunday, will, I fear call down your anger upon me. Forgive me for even thinking you might regret & beleive [sic] it is but the deep, true love I have for you, which makes me so anxious that the future may not bring one regret, or be marred by

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one unpleasant thought of what might have been. If I am not your own little pet, no one shall have the privilege of calling me by the sweet name, which your dear lips have pronounced so often! You said such nice things sometimes that they caused me to forget all the pain & were cherished & thought of during many a happy moment!! I trust you enjoyed the game of cards you had with the boys – profit of it dear, the time will soon end when you can have those pleasant bachelor evenings – but I am not going to rule with such a rod of iron, as not to let you have your friends in now & then, in order to remind you of the by gone days, when you were free from the cares & troubles of providing for a wife. I did not think you had missed a mail & gave all the blame to the C.P.R – had you not been so honest, dear, I never should have been the wiser!. Hope Mr. Wood's illness lasted but a short time – it is her time to nurse him, as he did enough for her when she was so ill last spring I beleive [sic]. You see your little pet is small, his big, & little ones are more dainty & quiet around a sick bed, particularly where deep love lies hidden from mortal

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eye, yet is so sweet to both nurse & patient! – I do mean all I tell you of the affection you have won & I am proud to have had so much to give – I used to regret sometimes that I was so chary of all the tender feeling God had blessed me with, but now see that I have only more for you having been so careful in the past!!. Drayner does tell such untruths to his mother & brother – the former has implicit faith in him, but that cannot be said of the latter, who knows what a young terror his brother is! Lex may be wise in not telling all, but, my darling must promise to confide fully in me – they say a woman cannot keep a secret, or be discreet – give me the chance of proving the contrary & promise to tell me all your trials. When anything

agreeable comes to you, I can participate in your joy. When trouble assails my pet, I can sympathize with him & show that a woman is not merely a plaything but has a heart & mind equal to any emergency. Do not think the brothers & sisters are very fond of me! They love all the same having no reason to think more of me than of the others! – Grandmamma was delighted to get your photo & said she had written you & hoped you liked her style of letter writing – her future big grand-son, think of that!!... I think she writes a splendid letter, do not you? If you treat me to such a nice title, do you think me [goosie] enough to try & persuade you such is not the case? You have guessed rightly as to the month of my birth – I thought a word about green would settle it. You must not imagine me good, for I am far from being as much so as the majority of my sex, but thank God! You have such faith in me! It is not that writing would fatigue me, but the letters would be uninteresting & not worth sending so far to the one whom my heart loves so much. I find out by counting up days that I shall receive no more news from you this week, so it is time for me to cease my chatting, if I desire to keep one small item for conversation in my Sunday letter to my pet. March has come in “like a lamb” & the sun is very bright & warm today: trust it [come] continue, having had an extra supply of cold. Good bye my darling. God bless & keep you safe for the little girl so far away who loves you so very dearly.

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Trusting Mrs. Mac & Lex are quite well & with fond love to them both. Hoping to hear from my own darling very soon, with sweet kisses, I am as ever

Your

own loving

Maye.

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