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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

Vaudreuil
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My own Darling Sam,

You will have made up your mind, judging by the number of letters I favor you with, that I desire to spoil you entirely, even before I have the chance of drilling you in the way you ought to go, so that my task will be all the more difficult in the happy future that is still a closed book, to us both, but which seems so bright with pleasant dreams only waiting to be realized. It is needless for me to begin the old story over again, by telling you how very often your last have been perused – each one pleases me more than its predecessor, so if perchance, I was asked which letter I loved best I should certainly be very much at a loss to reply & would end by saying “they were all equally dear to me!” Did Julia marry the Scotch doctor? She must find the climate of California lovely & will enjoy it – is her residence there permanent? I really cannot see how my pet can have become better since I first

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

[bowed?] so stiffly to him & all the while, my heart was beating so wildly, that I feared to give a friendly clasp of my trembling hand, certain that he would detect the throbbing of the truant which now had found its king! I give you proof my darling of what a joyous task writing to you is by the length & number of the missives I pen to my pet so far from me. If the words you trace are nonsense, then nonsense is what I love best to read, so write that

way to me every day if you like: it is quite [serious?] & enough for my poor brain to understand & thoroughly comprehend. The pony's education will have to be commenced all over again I fear: he will have forgotten all he ever knew & will keep further from his old companion, than he did during that last ride, when he has the happiness of carrying this heavy weight once more!! Your news of the desertion leads me to beleive [sic] you are not as heavy a [loser] as I thought – I hope such is the case, & that you will not suffer in any way! You seemed kind & considerate to Sergt. Major Smart I think his name was & he has been very ungrateful to treat you in that manner. La! La! my pet finds me pretty! – so much the better for his own sake – it is better so, but no-

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

thing will convince me that I can have the faintest pretention to good looks – I am not sorry you think so well of me & trust your idea will never change as far as looks go. – If you fail to see the scarlet jacket, it will be your own fault. Dr. Allan asked me when first I arrived in Macleod, if I too was going to get scarlet fever? I replied “not likely, but if I do, it will be someone worth getting it for”. I wonder if my words ever come back to his memory. he meant it in fun & I took it that way: redcoats have a great fascination for even more than unsophisticated damsels as one invariably imagines a brave, warm heart beats beneath & likes to come within scorching distance. I do not remember saying the Com. spoke of Lex's removal to Freddy D. but that the latter had written down here, telling all sorts of stories & attributing the removal to incapacity or mistakes made by Lex, while in command in Lethbridge – is not that what I said? I saw through Capt. Neale, far better than Mrs. Mac did, & told both Lex & herself. She is so good, she thinks every one the same – you see there are so many faults in my constitution, I can see them in others as well. So you must insist on my paying the kisses! what if I refuse, & ~~refuse~~? it takes two you know to make them sweet – but you will have been so long without one, you will have

forgotten how to steal or take one by the time you are within the required limit, - however, my love is such, that I will not be selfish, so I may safely say, you will have enough of them to satisfy all your demands, & without too much coaxing, as you will have been so far from me, during the two years of “waiting.” Will Mrs. Mac’s saddle be the same style as mine? She must be delighted at the prospect of possessing one of her own & can indulge in a ride whenever she feels like it. Mamma & I were out calling again this afternoon & enjoyed it. The day was lovely, but if you were only to see the depth of the snow – we cannot complain that it has not fallen in sufficient quantity, but the sun is now getting so warm that it will soon melt & render the roads once more impassable. Were you at Mrs. Mac’s card party? Surely she never left her future nephew in the shade? did you miss me when enjoying the game we so often played together, my own dearly loved darling? I have not played once since our last game together & will not likely, before we meet again, as none here care

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

for cards, except for telling fortunes – do you remember mine? how indignant I was when the insinuation was made that they were so much alike that you might fancy I was hinting at you – it was far from my thoughts as you know; had such been the case, had I for an instant dreamed you cared for me, I should have hesitated before telling you what I saw there – every scene, every word you said, comes back vividly to my mind & causes me infinite pleasure when alone & thinking of my pet. Do you not find it strange for me to call you my pet? does it in any way lessen your dignity? Sometimes I fear to offend you by giving you such a name, but the truth is bound to prevail, & Heaven knows you are my own pet, & the one I so dearly love. Is Mr. Mathews nice? Young? how do you like him, as I believe [sic] you did not know him previous to his arrival in Macleod. I hope Mr. Campbell is improved in health – as the spring is coming in, the warm weather may prove of great benefit in restoring his strength. So Mr.

Wroughton is slowly making up his mind to try & mend his broken heart by selecting another victim! happy man! to forget so easily – are you all like him that way? You do seem to allow

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

things to fade into oblivion, without too much trouble – it is better so; life is short & one should enjoy it as much as possible: you see women are different “A woman’s heart is the only true plate for a man’s likeness. An instant gives the impression, and an age of shame & sorrow cannot efface it.” – I suppose you will have card parties by the score during Lent – enjoy it while you can as I told you before. This time next year, you may be sighing for the bachelor days & it will be too late! I trust, my own darling, that I have not given you any trouble in the changes I desire made in the house, but knowing that an ample supply of work would be found for the carpenters in the spring, I thought it better to mention it right away in order that you could have it done immediately. if you think the color of the walls downstairs will not quite harmonize with the style of my beauty, or tend to mar my complexion you are at perfect liberty to change them to suit – but, I do not desire to ask for too much & appear unreasonable, even before you are a slave forevermore. Well, my own pet, I wrote a very long letter on Friday so will finish before this one gets too tame. Good night my darling & happy dreams be yours

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

during your hours of rest. Very many sweet kisses I send in this, sure of their being welcome. Write soon, my own pet, to the little girl who loves you so fondly & thinks of you “every day & hour, that now I pass so sadly far from thee” – with a heart full of deepest love for my darling, I remain ever

Your

own little

Maye.

[/pg 6]