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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil,
Aug 31st / 89.

My own darling Sam,

Although you were so busily employed on the 20th you found time to pen me a dear letter which afforded me great delight on Wednesday last when it reached me. I know you are very much occupied preparing for the Governor's visit which is now rapidly approaching & I trust your work will not be for nothing. I hear that Mr. Royal objects to receiving him saying he has not a house sufficiently good for that - that owing to that, Lord Stanley will go straight on to B.C. without visiting the Territories at all – is such the case? Your last letters have certainly not been as long as you usually write but your little girl is well aware of all your different duties, so excuses you for your brevity. I see you went out as you intended as no letter came to me on Friday, positive proof you had not returned in time to write your little slave. Time slowly &

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surely brings the day of our meeting nearer & I can scarcely realize that five months from now I will be your wife – does it not seem incredible? to think that a year ago we were hardly friends! I was reading over an old letter written to my mother a few days after we met & in speaking of you say “Major Steele seems to be a very nice man but does not care at all for ladies & in fact, I should imagine him very indifferent” – you can judge from that what my impressions were. when I recall the things to mind, I fancy I must be dreaming! – I will require to be told many things I assure you, if you wish me to fulfil my duties in regard to the position you occupy as I desire to do, so you will have to initiate me in the correct thing to do. Many & many a time I should have given a great deal to take a peep at you in your quarters without your knowledge, if I had only been able to satisfy my curiosity & I was charmed once, when Mr. Huot suggested asking Mrs. Mac, myself & a few gentlemen in to five o'clock tea, but he forgot all about it I fear & I was too bashful to mention it. I often pictured you as I

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fancied you looked in an easy chair I heard spoken of a few times. I regretted it very much, particularly when you were ill, that society's rules prevented my playing the ministering angel now & then. Well, pet, I do not think I shall ever regret my choice, for he is the love of my heart & will I know make me happy. if you could only see my heart & and the pang I feel at leaving all so dear to me, you would never question the depth & strength of my great affection for you, my darling. if you are good & kind as you have been until now, & will be, unless you change very much, I shall be very, very happy, but, unkindness would soon alter my feelings & I can hate as deeply as I can love – kindness will make a wife a perfect slave, & ill treatment, a demon. that is the spirit that reigns in me & I can be very hateful if I chose. that does not seem like mild Maye, but it is my true character. It is a good thing you are spared the disappointment sure to follow the announcement of Miss H.s non-appearance. were you still fancy-free you might be wearing your heart away, mourning her loss. as it is, you can afford to tease the others a little & enjoy their discomfiture. I am satisfied with what you said of the society, provided you suffer no annoyance from it in any way. they would not harm me, for they would not think it worth their while, but you, my pet..... I have not seen my cousin, Mr. Taschereau, but know him of old. he may have improved, but feel doubtful. The evening at Dunmore made you feel how great a charge I might prove to be & what confidence I reposed in you, my darling. I felt happy & it showed me how truly I loved you – it drew us nearer together, for you were the only one I had near to whom I could turn. as we two seemed alone & were in a measure, I realized all that my promise to be yours meant for both. I shall never forget it, I am sure. Papa's business worries me sometimes & just as I worry most, something invariably turns up to help him out of his difficulties. I know it is silly of me, but when I see him sad, it makes me so, especially since my return from the N. west –

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You expect to tell all. well see that you do, else you will not hear my secrets. the last was a serious one & might have turned out very differently.... None of mine are as serious as that, in fact are not worth repeating, I am sure – they would not interest you in the least, as they are too frivolous to be told such a judge as my dear old pet. The questions are not very important & lose nothing by keeping. there are is many & many a one I should fear to mention now, although we have settled some difficult

questions before this. Those I have in reserve will be easily answered later & cause no awkwardness, I fancy. You see, I have very little idea of what a man has to answer for & would be sorry if the majority had as much as some I know of. mine, the questions I mean, will keep & are of very little importance – it is merely curiosity which would prompt me to ask them so rest in peace for some months, at least. I attended one picnic in Macleod, but did not find it as charming as it might have been, although Mr. & Mrs. C. Wood were there. Mr. Haultain was the only beau & he & I

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sympathized so well so that we scarcely spoke to each other. I hope Mrs. Mathews was spared some pounding – if not, that you will send him off for some time longer. he must be a very despicable fellow to ill treat a woman! – he does not deserve the name of pet & you must not desecrate it by using it in connection with such a man. it is dear to me & Mrs Mac & I enjoyed many a pleasant moment talking of “the pets”. Did your friends come to the races & had you any trouble in fixing things up to receive them? – all these details interest me, my darling, & I fancy I see you doing the [hours] of the little home which will soon shelter us both. Your friends wish to profit of your last few months of liberty (fearing your spartan may be a terror) & enjoy your hospitality, before a woman takes the reins of power – “in her small white hands” –

You must not be surprised if the ladies favor Kennedy – the medico in barracks is not a favorite & besides, if I mistake not is a bachelor – consequently, he is altogether in the shade where they are concerned –

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I feel if I were acquainted with him I should dislike him, being prejudiced already, so you cannot wonder at the other ladies. Kennedy has experience as well, which is more than the other can say, I suppose. mind you, I have not changed my opinion of Dr. K. in any way, but Well, my pet it is late & my peeps are closing by degrees, so conclude my letter will prove more interesting if I continued tomorrow. With many sweet kisses & fondest love, your own little girl reluctantly bids you good-night & many happy dreams – Sept. 1st. To think that another month has elapsed on your year of “waiting” & that in four months we shall have met!! the summer has passed so quickly that we have scarcely noted the flight of time & it was only when writing you that I remarked the dates. Our boys are feeling rather blue at the parting now so near, as they leave us on Tuesday morning. poor Antoine’s tears are ready to flow every moment & the charm of college life

has entirely lost its gloss at thought of leaving Mamma: he is young, but it will enable him to leave school young & make a man of him, though he has always been that. A photographer came up from Montreal yesterday to take a family group – we were taken on the gallery near the front porch & then down on the lawn. I hope they will be a success but groups are difficult to take, especially such a large number, being twelve. As it is the last summer we may ever be together, Papa desired it particularly. my going seems to have awakened them to the fact that we have been happy, & that there is such a thing in the world as separation. I alluded to it today & Mamma begged me to desist saying, “it is too true so pray do not speak of it”. Papa had our dear old home photographed as well, & that is sure to be nice. Our friends, the Cassils came over from their island as expected & had tea with us. We had a very pleasant time. Mr. C. is quite musical, having a pretty, sweet voice for an old man, for he must be near sixty. He

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sings Scotch songs as only a Scotchman can sing them, though I must say I find far more music & feeling in Irish melodies. We had songs, violin & piano until eleven when they left us, seemingly well pleased with their evening. Frank & Antoine went to a picnic next day as his boys & had fun. He has no children & lots of money, but has a number of nieces & nephews. being very hospitable, his house is usually filled with visitors. Louise returned home Friday evening to be here for the photo, but goes again at the end of the week. She is helping Miss Hubert with some of her trousseau, as they expect to be married in the beginning of Oct. Two young fellows came this morning after low Mass to spend the day with us, Mr. Drayner being here also, we are once more eighteen. It will not occur again until Xmas, or N. Year’s, when we will be more numerous. Mr. D. was very generous during Louise’s visit. he gave her a pretty old-fashioned amethyst & brilliant brooch, a small carbuncle ring & a lovely one with five opal’s [sic] – the latter stone is considered very unlucky, but she is not at all

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superstitious, so does not attach any importance to such trifling ideas. Grandmamma must be past Winnipeg now – according to the way I have calculated, she reached there this morning by ten & will be in Dunmore about four tomorrow. she is getting to be quite a traveller & it does not fatigue her as much as we feared it would. You must be sure to tell me what she says of me & exactly what she does say. I fear she may tell you I look wretched. I am feeling better, so you must not fancy me ill – anyway,

for your sake, I am going to indulge in a French medicine, wine & cod liver oil. Alice has been taking it for some time & it has done her the world of good, so Papa wishes me to try it also. As I look rather altered I cannot convince them that I am ~~not~~ well, but when I rest well, I shall be all right. I am not fooling & hope you believe me for I am telling you the perfect truth. I would not deceive you for anything my pet, especially in such a serious subject as my health. Alice has just been entertaining a young fellow & I could hear [sic] them laughing &

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talking & have been disturbed a little. it is a glorious day & every person is out enjoying it. My own darling pet, I will now say au revoir – be sure & write when you can. God bless you my own darling one, & keep you safe until we meet again. With fond love & many sweet kisses, I am as ever,
Your own dear, loving

Maye.

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