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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil,
Nov 12th / 89.

My own dear old Sam,

Your dear, nice letter dated Dec 2nd I perused yesterday & enjoyed it throughly [sic] I assure you – it pleases me much to know you derive pleasure from reading my poor missives, but they are sincere, my pet, & come from a warm, loving heart & as such deserve kind treatment at your hands. It seemed so strange for you to write me of the accident which happened some years ago when you were driving with Lex – about a month ago while looking over some old letters I came across one he wrote me from Battleford in which he mentions the accident but not the name of the friend who accompanied – at that time I wondered if perchance it could be Major Steele & your letter proves I was right. I met a

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Mr. Wylde, an Englishman, in Ottawa in ['80] who intended, in fact did go to the N. west during my visit there – he was very tall, & slight, had fair hair & a handsome face & was a nice fellow – can he be the one you mean? – he was particularly attentive to me at a large ball given for me, by my uncle, Judge Taschereau. You had a very narrow escape & I cannot imagine how you were not severely hurt. Indeed, you will be better pleased to enjoy your pipe of peace, than I to see you go, so you cannot fool me, my pet, but I will not let you smoke too much as it does not agree with you & you will require all your energy just about that time. So you think I am not curious – why I am fearfully so & am just dying to hear what the something may be. I do not know how I shall exist until you condescend to tell me, my pet & keep thinking all kinds of things & do not believe I have hit on the real

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something after all!! I did not know curiosity was one of your failings & do not believe it yet. You will have to try & remember your confessions, for you have ample time to prepare & you will find me very lenient, I am sure. If

your memory fails so will mine, so you will not get the better of me, that is certain. I will not be angry at anything you tell me, so you must promise to do so, will you not? to help you conquer your faults I must know them & it will be easier for you to mention them, than for me to be kept constantly on the alert to find them out. I could have thrown aside my work many a time last autumn, but, as I said before it was better to keep out of mischief & could do so by keeping my busy fingers continually occupied. It is a great mistake for you to persist in thinking you will find me perfect, for you will be sadly mistaken & your awakening will be a rude one, I know. I am warm-hearted, of course, in that you will not be disappointed, but that is all. I could not judge very well what kind of a place Macleod is, but the few persons I met, affected the English I found & I was told all the ranchers about there were throughly [sic] so – I am a Canadienne sure & I dearly love my own country, but you must not be surprised at it, as I have a large heart & am very patriotic. I do hope I shall enjoy plenty riding for I am very fond of it, especially if you can find sufficient leisure to escort me now & then. Well! pet so you think me a strange young lady! must I plead guilty to the soft impeachment? must I, by way of penance for the moments I worried you, confess that I shall be ready to be sacrificed when you come & we have named the day? I suppose it is too late to change, so unless unforeseen [sic] circumstances prevent

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prevent our marriage, it shall take place at the time mentioned – it depends upon you altogether. You are not a child my darling to be toyed with at my pleasure, & it was to suit you I gave you full liberty to arrange the time, & will, as I said do all I possibly can to be ready. I hope your visit to church did you good & that you did not think hard things of your own little girl, because she may have seemed very strange. You may be very much disappointed in “Cleopatra” – I did not read it, merely glancing over a few pages as I did it up to send my own old pet. It is very thoughtful of you to think of the servant girl & your idea is good – we want a good general servant who will wash & iron as well as cook – the rest I leave to you, knowing it is in able hands. Mrs. Mac you have seen ere this I have no doubt – do you find her looking well? – Grandmamma will be moving soon, as she is

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frightened of the cold weather – it will be much colder when we go up than when we parted almost a year ago, but you will have full right to protect

from stormy weather by then, so I will not mind it. You must not say I did not care much for you when we said farewell! Heaven alone knows what you were to me then & better far it was for me to fully realize all you were, with this great distance between us – my love has not diminished of that rest assured, & your many qualities of heart & mind are more fully known & appreciated, by the long separation which has tested the depth of our love than if we had been together all these months & 'tis better so! – it will be very easy for you to get rid of Mr. S. if you spend two days in Regina, unless he was invited also – in that case he will have the delight of your society all the trip. Mr. D. is taller than his brother & much better built Alice
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says – he is a larger man in every way, as Mr. D. is fat & rosy. When I am near, you must endeavor to have sufficient leisure to confess your sins – you will have it when recruiting, if you then desire me to accompany you, as you seem to wish now – it will be a very nice way to pass away the hours, do you not think? So you did not care whether I smiled or not the night we returned from the Mts.? Well, I should have looked volumes had I dared to trust my eyes, so if I did not raise too often to your dear face, you cannot be surprised. I felt I had a friend in you & your nearness made me feel so happy, dear old Sam. Had Mr. S. been very observant he might have noticed how I listened to every footstep & noise I heard & would have found out my secret then, but his confidence in his own powers of pleasing completely misled him. Well, pet, I now turn to your dear missive of the 5th received today & so often perused. I attributed your dating your last a month ahead to the great anxiety you are in to start on your trip, my darling, so you see how conceited I am now. Louise is very pretty & has lovely grey eyes not at all in the style of mine – you will I am sure admire her – her hair is pretty, complexion & figure good & she has a lovely hand which Mr. D. delights in decorating with handsome rings. Gertie is fairer & has bright brown eyes, a nice figure, a little taller & also has a beautiful hand, which I have often envied them. Louise's mouth is prettier than Gertie's & altogether they are fine girls & both were considered very nice looking. Alice & I are different & the ugly ducklings. Well, indeed! what will I do if you are bigger than you were when I left? – you then weighed 214 & I so often
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wished I were some inches taller in order not to appear so much smaller than my pet – never mind, the cares & worries of matrimony will soon make you thin again I fear & then they will attribute your emaciated look to ill

treatment on my part & give you their deepest sympathy. By the by be sure & let me know when you intend leaving, in order that my letters may not arrive after your departure & fall into other hands – some persons are very indiscret [sic] & think nothing of opening letters written to others & I should be very much mortified if such a fate befell any of my epistles meant for you alone. Mrs. Mac & Lex must have been initiating you lately – are they more affectionate than when I was there? we may be no better in that respect, so we cannot say too much of them until we see. I will add though that I hardly

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think the public will get the benefit of any of our love, what say you? I hope the Comr. will let you remain where you are for some time & move the others about for a change. You will not be likely to consider it kind, if he changes you so often after you are settled. Poor Woolly's love could do no harm & he never cared sufficiently for me to give up his bad habit until he joined the force – I even detected it on his breath several times, though he said he took nothing. he could not deceive me though – I mean even last year when I was near you, my darling pet. You are right, some waltz very badly & in a very unbecoming manner – it is owing to that that it has so often been forbidden in our church. "Changing the time" we will drop if you wish, but let me have a last word on the subject & ask who would really suffer

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inconvenience or uncertainly? not I, I fancy my pet if the truth must be really told. I must be truthful & confess my heart is faint sometimes, for such is the case, but your words reassure me a little & perhaps time will cure me. I do think your love different from that of many others. I cannot say whitey, but I feel it so I trust you all the more. It will I believe if my memory is faithful be exactly a year tomorrow since you gave me the bond which until now, is a proof of our affection – how quickly time has passed, still, I am very anxious to see my own old pet. Why, in about two weeks or three at most, I suppose you shall be on your way East, will you not? If perchance I should happen to be in Montreal at the time, if you telegraph me I shall meet you on your arrival – sent to Vaudreuil, they would wire it to me & your little girl would be the first to welcome you, my pet. Of course, I am not sure of my doings about then, but you will be sure to find me I have no doubt. Alice & I had tea at Uncle Allan's on Sunday. he spoke to me of a Mr. Martin, a Canadian (French I mean) who is in the force – it seems to me the one whom I saw in Dunmore bore that name – he studied here & is

a notary by profession. I do not remember him, but Uncle says he had a letter written some time ago in which he mentions you. I sometimes find Uncle hard to believe, as he has the [name] of inventing many things, so do not know whether it is true or not. He has a family of four daughters & two sons – the eldest girls are fine looking. he is very handsome but has a look of - - - in his bright, blue eyes & is a man I have never been able to tolerate. I have strong likes & dislikes & since babyhood have almost

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hated him – I used to merely [bow] & never open my lips to him & strange as it may seem, never broke bread in his house, until Sunday last. I am a queer little girl, but I cannot help it, my pet. He has a lovely tenor voice & sings so sweetly. We are very busy with our autumn housecleaning & in the country that is a big undertaking, I assure you. I am so eager to finish all my work so as to devote all my time to you when you come & am sewing for all I am worth, but will candidly say, I feel as though I shall hate the sight of needles & thread & will not wish to take them in my hand for a year at least. John, Richard & Gertie enjoyed the ball at Mrs. [Geoffrion's] immensely – she is Chief Justice Sir. A. Dorion's eldest daughter & is a charming hostess – her ~~only~~ daughter is out

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but does not seem to care much for society – she has three children altogether. We are having gloomy weather, but it does not rain, a consolation anyway. Well, my dear pet, it is getting very late & one by one all the family are retiring so I too will say Good-night. Pleasant dreams, my own darling & write soon to

Your own dear loving

little Girl –

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