

2008.1.1.1.1.59

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

Vaudreuil,  
Aug 3<sup>rd</sup> / 89.

My own darling old pet,

What pleasure is in store for me this evening! The prospect of a chat with my very own old pet (as I once or twice ventured to call you to yourself) is a delightful one & your two charming of the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> both lie open before me, each pleading to be answered first, but age wins the day! I fear my last may have pained you, my darling, but my heart was very sore when I penned the lines, so I trust you will understand me well. I cannot restrain the different feelings which sway me sometimes & with you I must be as I am: no dissimulation where you are concerned, my pet, so if I now & then say a word to hurt you in any way, forgive me, dear & know it is the strength of the deep warm love I feel for you, which causes me to say it. Well, pet, if you thought me indifferent once, you surely do not think so now & it is far better to begin that way

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

than vice versa, is it not? It very often happens the other way & then the dream is speedily dispelled. I know full well some men have great temptations & that those who have passed through the fire are far ahead of the others. a girl seldom knows when a man has been “tried by fire,” believe me, consequently she cannot think more of him on that account. it is kind of you to speak so well of me to Mrs. Mac. she is no doubt a willing listener, but must in her innocent heart, pity you for your infatuation for one whom she knows has so many faults, which you are so blind to, my darling. if you have been tried by fire, so may I – it comes to every one I fancy & later on

“I shall know by the gleam & glitter,  
Of the golden chains you wear  
By your heart's calm strength in loving,  
Of the trials you have had to bear!”

as Adelaide Proctor so well expresses it! – Yes I am anxious to meet you

again, my dear one & we shall soon have been acquainted a year. I shall never forget the first evening we met & how I felt when first I had the

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

delight of looking into your dear eyes & how my heart went out to you! time seemed long to me when we were cutting each other & I scarcely think a day ever dawned without my wondering what would take place ere the sun set; whether you would be more merciful, more tolerant of the poor little girl you seemed to have made up your mind to annihilate ere she left the west! When you were nice as you can be when it pleases you, I actually used to think I might be dreaming – strange I could be so blind! but you see your way of showing admiration was so contrary to the way I was accustomed to, that I would have believed myself very conceited, had I dared to encourage the hope that that was your manner of doing things. others would hint it some way or others, but you said never a word. When we used to ride, I too found you threw off a little of the stiffness which characterized our interviews within doors, but attributed it to your desire to make my ride agreeable for Lex's sake. had I been aware that you had ever heard my name, things might have been otherwise, but being altogether ignorant that I was in any way other than a perfect stranger, I could not possibly imagine you could care for me – it served to give zest to our friendship no doubt, & although we were sometimes at cross purposes I cannot help recalling that time with pleasure. I seemed very indifferent & altogether different to the true state of my heart, but it served to spur on my darling, thought it was far from my thoughts, & only made me seem more worth the winning. It charms me very much to hear you say you think so much of my appearance, but after you will have left the west on your trip to see me, you will meet with so many pretty, stylish girls, you will wonder what you saw in me & may compare me with others & the decision not be favorable to your own little girl either! – If I looked sweet in Dunmore it must have been love shining out of my eyes, & love that had cast a glamour over your usually clear sight, my darling. If love fills your heart, how about mine? I have always endeavored to keep it free from fire, in order that if ever it were my destiny to make

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

a man happy, he should have all the love I could possibly give him. was I not a very wise young lady? – I am sure you would have taken me out riding even had you not enjoyed it, still it pleases me to know it was a pleasure for you as well. I trust it will be the same when we go after our

return to the West & when the “sweet short words” will have been spoken for quite a long time I suppose. It was kind of Mrs. Macfarlane to send you the Mignonette & it well expresses the sentiments I entertain for you. “The more I see you, the better I love you”, although such a distance rolls between us that I should say “The more you write, the better I love you” so pray, bear that well in mind. I hope your headache was of short duration as you say nothing of it in your last. We have very disagreeable weather – rain every day; in fact so much of it that although it is Sunday they are harvesting hay this p.m, permission having been given to do so, as it will

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

prove a total failure if left longer on the field. I forgot to date my letter just as I commenced the last sentence as I left off rather abruptly last evening, but fatigue overcame me & I was compelled to say good-night in thought only. I hope you rested well & that you are at present penning some lines to your little girl. Three of the Misses Hubert, my brotherinlaw’s sisters, came up & spent yesterday afternoon with us, returning to Montreal in the evening with John who accompanied them. Their visit was short, but they seemed to enjoy it. Their youngest brother has been with us for a week – he is such a nice fellow & has always been a pet of mine. he is twenty-two now, but came here first when only fourteen or fifteen, so I look upon him as only a boy yet. had the house not been so full, we would have kept them to spend today, but being sixteen we can find no more place. Your dear letter of the 25<sup>th</sup> comforted me very much, my own dear pet, & I was amused to learn the parson was enjoying your hospitality once more.

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

I hope my pet that you will find me a consolation sometimes, but fear you will be disappointed if you expect to find anything angelic in my composition. What do you wish me to kiss you in public for? is it to prove how complete my affection is & what a slave I have become? You seem anxious that I should let every one see me do it, proud, haughty Maye!!!... Yes, you changed from the evening I told you that you looked nice, but you must remember it was after I had promised to be yours. The evening I sat near Mr. Zach was that one of the day you returned from a trip of a few days duration – you had gone off on Sunday, just after you had the lovely group taken; if your memory is good, although men as a rule do not remember trifles, you may recall the day. I wished to show you that I was not so indifferent as I led you to suppose & the proof of the photo gave me an opportunity of breaking the icy reserve which had sprung up between

us. – your open confessions of not having rested during your absence & other things made me begin to think you were perhaps in earnest when you had told me about a week before how dear I was to you. I feared that you would read the answer you desired in my eyes as I glanced at you on entering ~~ing~~ so I looked up but not at you, not wishing to give myself away, before so many. I did thaw out a little, but melted completely away next day, when a bold soldier came to ask if I intended to go riding – upon being answered in the negative, he seemed anxious to enter, so I very politely requested him to do so, little dreaming he would leave as my affianced husband – such is life!! – My family will I am sure, approve of my choice – I only wish I was as sure to please all your relations. I hope you will have sufficient leisure to come & see me several times if you are here six weeks before the happy day. You must not come & surprise me dear – you must tell me what day to expect you, in order that I may be here myself to welcome you to my own home. Your coming

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

& I absent, would make you feel very bad, I am sure & I particularly wish to be here. So Mr. Pritchard thinks you look well! They will not think me such a Tartar perhaps after all, if they see I am such a reasonable Queen. It certainly does not look as if the Comr. had much faith in Capt. Neale, when Mr. Howe is in command. I have no doubt men can be pretty bad & stoop to almost anything, if it suits them. One can scarcely trust man or woman either, I fear. Woolly is I hope on the mend. You are kind & considerate, & he will no doubt praise you when next I see him, poor fellow. The springs seemed beneficial for cases of his kind & I hope he will soon find relief – I always have leisure in the evening, but must be amiable so devote time to the boys, accompanying them when they play the violin or other instruments – it being my last vacation with them, I desire them to recall me always with feelings of

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

love when I am far away, for I have a great big heart, filled with home love & it grieves me deeply to part from all so dear – it is better to have them say a kind, affectionate word when I am gone, than otherwise. Mrs. Mac must be happy, having her house furnished by now. I have no doubt it must look very well – is the paper in both houses just the same? – You must be sure & tell me the color ~~the~~ of the paper in the different rooms, in order that we may know what kind of curtains to get – do you think you will remember that? – Does Mrs. Mathews call Mr. M. Hubby? it must amuse you. we will

commence the riding lessons where we left off & you will teach me jumping the first thing – my fall must have been graceful – you were too surprised to see me, that is the reason you think that. The Dr. must be a pet when he has such a pretty name as “Cabbage leaf” – did he ride with the champion? if he is a

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

tenderfoot, he may feel it, but surely he must be accustomed to the pastime, when he is in the Force – too bad he is such a softy as a person of that style does not get on in the medical profession. Mr. Starnes’ engagement is not given out by her relations, though his brother in law says it is so – he will I suppose, obtain leave, but will they not object to let so many officers be absent at once? Mr. Huot will I suppose come down with you as at first intended – his being away from your district will make it easier. The champion also told me when he left for Calgary just before my departure, that he also was coming this Autumn, so you will be quite a party – some one will be disappointed I fear – what if they required your presence too much to give you the desired holiday? What then? – Did you find the nights cool last summer? but you were under canvas & that makes a great difference – if you left up stairs in the same room as was allotted to me in Mrs. Mac’s, you would not say it was cool – the window is small & only half in each room you know, so, you must not be surprised if any young lady found it warm. she was cool sometimes I know - - -

The boys are bothering the life out of me to go to the [Dorians] this evening & will not go without me. I feel tired & do not feel like going, but will, I fear, give in & chaperon the clan, bent on having a good time. It has grown very cloudy & rain is near, which will spoil our pleasure, if it falls. Well, my pet, they are calling to try & have an early supper in order that I may have ample time to beautify my ugly self, so I suppose I must leave my darling & say good night. Write me as often as you can – your dear letters are so welcome & I love my darling so! – Hoping God will bless & protect my lover from all harm, with a heart filled with

[/pg 9]

[pg 10]

warm, deep love for my darling boy, I am ever

Your own dear, loving

little Girl.

[/pg 10]