

2008.1.1.1.1.84

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil,
Nov 5th / 89.

My own darling Sam,

You cannot imagine what a terrible culprit I feel tonight when I pen these loving lines to my own dear pet for allowing Sunday to pass without writing you, my darling. I went out to make a few calls in the afternoon the day being fine & compelled in fact to go. I went to Uncle Henry's last & they insisted upon my remaining to tea & to spend the evening. I returned after eleven too late to begin a letter to you dear. I hope you will forgive me for it, as it is the first offense & likely the last. You cannot believe how unhappy it has made me feel, especially since your two dear missives of the 26th and 29th ult have come. I missed your letter last Thursday & longed so to hear from you, but you in a measure made

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up for it, by the long one I received yesterday. You must indeed be delighted to get rid of your visitors, still when the Comr. is in good humor & pleased with all it repays you for the trouble. I read the Macleod paper with pleasure & do you know, pet, Papa seems quite proud of his future son-in-law & I am not surprised? You will be getting quite spoilt if they continue bestowing such praise on you, dear. The Comr. is not spared, evidently Mr. Wilson's removal has caused the Editor to come out of his shell & it will, I hope have some effect, for the ogre is really unmerciful. It was a very strange proceeding for him to act as he did at Banff, particularly as the officers were not in any way misbehaving themselves. You know how to treat him & he cannot fail to know you usually, if not always are in the right. We are charmed to know Grandma is looking so well & trust it will prove beneficial for some time, but she must be on the move &

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hates cold weather so much that she is, I hear anxious to get away. I did not think that group by any means beautiful & when I look at it now, it

makes me feel sad for you have a tired, weary expression on your dear face. You must not be surprised if I reflect seriously on the step that is before me. I am a queer mixture, brimming over with love & in consequence all sorts of ideas unsettle my usual calm mind - if our home was not so far it would not cause me to reflect as I do, but the parting with all my own dear ones is forever before my eyes. I do not think I shall ever have cause to regret it, but the future is so uncertain, dear!. I know you shall do all to make me happy, so my fears are not on account of that. I give the greatest proof of my full trust & love in giving you myself, darling & cannot say more. Mr. D. was up on Sunday & was very amiable – he seems to be improving if it can only last but he certainly looks very much better than he did some months ago. I do not understand why Mrs. Mac should fear my asserting myself, for it was never my intention, but she has let me see her hand quite plainly & so am now prepared for any emergency. She told me of the slight difference existing between Lex & yourself ever so many times before & I told her it did not matter to me, but this occasion it was so pointedly said that I could not help but notice it. Once last year she wished something done & was not pleased because Mrs. Neale succeeded when she failed. I told her if she was on a par with Mrs. N. she should have it – if not, that of course she had to bend. it made her furious & she spoke to Lex, repeating what I had said in my presence – he was displeased saying I put all kinds

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of nonsense in her head & I, in my turn defied him to prove I was wrong. the subject was changed & the remark that women could not understand such things put an end to it, not however without a proud glance from me bestowed on Lex which said as plainly as a look can say it, that I still knew I was right & saw through some of the game – that is why he said “God help poor Steele!” – he thinks you have a terror to deal with simply because I cannot believe he is [illegible] right. He tried to convince me of the same things when first I met him, but I am very incredulous dear as you may know, so he did not succeed. I will make you laugh about several trifles when you come. I did not think my outward appearance could change so much, still it is better to be that way instead of always too sweet for anything, is it not my pet? Grandma must not say too many nice things of me,

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because my pet may search for my many fine qualities & fail to find them.

You had no opportunity of judging of my character, as I had not very much to try me seriously when near you, darling. the coolness between Mrs. Mac seems to be more on my side, but she knows it exists as she mentioned the circumstance which caused it & endeavored to right herself by saying, you thought more of both for it. My cold has almost entirely disappeared, so you need not be anxious about me. I trust when I get another I shall have you near to take care of me & half the pain will be turned into pleasure with you by me devoting yourself to your own little girl. When Mrs. Mac asked me how long your leave was going to be I said I was not quite sure, as it might be rather difficult for you to get it. She seemed very much surprised as Lex was there to attend to all in your absence.

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Major Cottens will not like going to Maple Creek & must be furious at being sent there – it is too bad Mrs. H. indulges for I find her a pleasant person to converse with & seems very sensible too. You dear old pet, I did not mean it when I said you were only to stay one day when you come. You can remain as long as you care to & you know you shall be welcomed by all. I was only teasing, a thing I cannot resist indulging in now & then, even with those I love best. When I mentioned the fact to Mamma in Papa's presence, he was quite displeased at me for doing so & thinks I do not treat you with sufficient respect I sincerely believe. You know it is only my pleasant little way of teasing, so you must forgive me for it, will you not, pet? You will see the Bishop with Papa as he will have to accompany you – there is no fear of a refusal, for he unites persons of different religions every day – particularly when everything is all right. Father La Combe's [sic] letter is a good one. I see so many of his favorite expressions ~~throughout~~ throughout, that I fancy I see him speak. Mrs. Mac will be charmed to know that her house will not be cut up as she feared – she does not love the Dr. I feel sure & has felt like shaking him pretty often. She told me how nicely you had the house fixed & it must look very well indeed. Does not "the champion" take to Miss F.? – You have had more opportunity of judging of her by now, so must tell me what you think of her. The [Geoffries] give a large ball tomorrow night – none of us go – I was inclined at first, but gave it up – had you been near, it would have tempted me immensely. Gertie, Richard & John will represent the family. They usually inaugurate the season in Montreal & their balls are always a great

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great success. You will have more rest in the evenings & on Sundays after

we are married, as you will not have to write me, whether you are tired or not. I do not think you will find me very unreasonable & rather like home myself if those I love are near. Lex manages to pass away the time pretty pleasantly I think. Some fancy he is very hard worked but we know better, pet, do we not? You cannot imagine how sorry I am to hear of Julia's illness & trust she is on a fair way to a speedy recovery. Yes, it is sometimes the case for a husband to think a great deal of his wife & I will do my best to keep the veil drawn over your eyes, to keep you blindfolded a little longer. Mr. S. will feel quite consequential coming down at the same time as you do. You are wrong to take leave at this season if you are so busy – you know I told you often you could put it off until a more convenient

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time, but you do not seem inclined to do so. I have said it over & over again that you must suit yourself as to the month, knowing your many duties & mentioned the end of Dec wishing to find out, when you are likely to come. You know I shall be glad to see you, dear, but I can be very reasonable & wait..... How you will miss those lovely little suppers, but I will let you indulge in them as often as you please & will even promise to keep you company now & then, as you are well aware of the very good appetite I have. You can do all the recruiting you like when you come, as I shall enjoy it I am sure. I shall be delighted to accompany you & you must have known it all the time, though you feigned ignorance so well. As a rule I have noticed that if one or two dislike a man, others are sure to do so. Lex has been kind & they might at least give him his due. I am somewhat surprised Mr. Wroughton is that way.

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Yes, pet I would like to see you now, but the time is passing very speedily, is it not? the separation has been long but the constant interchange of letters has made it appear shorter. Mrs. Mac will be delighted with the new servant & I hope she will be a good one, as Mrs. M. finds it a very trying thing to do a little work. You surely do not admire my photos every day! – why if you saw yours, there was such a tell-tale shade over the spot where my lips have rested that I had to cease caressing it for fear others would notice it. You must tell me some day what qualities can be seen by my face & tell me if I really possess them – will you? but tell me truly, mind you – I know pretty well what faults I have, but the good qualities are not visible enough for me to know them perfectly. I have now finished answering your dear letter of the 26th but cannot lay it aside without first thanking you for its

length & its many interesting pieces of news. I enjoyed its perusal more than words can tell & its many loving expressions made my heart beat much faster than it usually does. Your dear epistle of the 29th came to me today & how much pleasure you gave me, pet! – I did not think you imagined for one moment that I would remain at home when you were away recruiting after the event – it was to tantalize you only, but, it is settled & I will go until you tire of me – it was half in fun, half in earnest that I feared you might fancy me in the way so while anxious to go, would not have told you, had I thought it would have put you out in any way & my mind is at rest also to know it will please you to have me near. I feel sure I shall be well & tenderly cared for when all my future is in your dear hands. Now, it depends where you wish to spend Xmas. I imagine

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you may feel inclined to spend it with your dear old brother, so in that case, it would be impossible for you to be here in time for that week. Xmas being on Wednesday, we would have but the next day, Friday & Saturday not being nice days. Still, it is no doubt too soon to mention dates, as yet – we will arrange all when you come. You seem determined I shall return next year! I will begin to think you are looking forward to enjoying a short time of your old bachelor days & will send me on a little trip in order not to meet with any opposition. Indeed! no one was more surprised than I was to hear Lex bring your name into our first serious conversation – it struck me as very peculiar at the moment, little dreaming it should ever come to pass. I do not see why Grandma should fancy there is anything

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angelic about me, for I often feel just the other way. Mrs. K. must have been shocked at her aunt's suicide – her mind was affected no doubt by Mrs. Allen's death, as they lived together & were alone. You will, I am positive find it difficult to keep your men servants once I grace your home, for I feel it in my heart, that they dislike feminine rule, although I must say they certainly would not find I bothered them! Craig would not have objected to my presence, I fancy. I regret to hear he has not been righted & hope it will end well. I reserved all the sweet glances until I had pledged my word to be yours, but did not think I could really look it, grey eyes being so cold & unexpressive as a rule. Ah, pet, no glance can ever convey the full force of my warm, deep affection & I too long for the day when you can have an idea of how much I love you.

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We are all delighted to hear Woolly is somewhat better & hope he will soon be well again. So you will act on my suggestion about Father Lacombe – I did not like to mention it, but thought it better to be on the safe side & not leave everything until the last. I am charmed to know your trousseau fits so well & hope it is not too swell, for you will cut me out entirely. I think you a great deal to look at & I have to raise my eyes a good distance before they come in range of yours, not to mention all the tip-toeing I shall have to practice before I become an expert. Our piano is lovely & Alice practices away for all she is worth. Mamma returned from Montreal on Thursday last – she found the College boys looking pretty well, excepting Regie, whose neck is covered with small boils which cause him much suffering. I spent that day with Aunt Emma & had a pleasant time – even her youngest, four years old is very anxious to see his cousin to be, Major Steele & says he has put away his pretty dress to come to Aunt [Amimie's] wedding. Louise has gone to spend two or three days with the Browns who leave towards the end of the week for Philadelphia – she goes nearly every week, but has more leisure than I have. Mrs. Wood has I suppose by now quite recovered from the accident. I saw in the last Gazette that Mrs. Bradley had lost her child – she will miss it more than she might have, going to a strange place where she has no friends. Well, my darling, it is late & my peeps are closing notwithstanding my strong endeavor to keep them open, so think I will say good-night. I hope you have forgiven me for missing my Sunday letter & I can safely promise it will not happen again. Trusting to hear from you

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very soon with fond love & many vows of affection, I fondly kiss my own darling pet & sweetheart Good night & pleasant dreams. As ever

Your own dear

little Girl.

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