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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil
April 2nd / 89.

My own dear Boy,

Your dear letter written on the 27th gave me great pleasure today, but I was grieved in my turn that you should have imagined I had misunderstood you about the many temptations that assail a man, particularly liquor? I never for a moment believed you had ever been intoxicated or anything of that sort: but was sorry you had, as you told “once taken a good deal” – it of course made my heart sore, for if I did not love you far more than I love myself I might perhaps not care. but with such deep affection, everything concerning you, good or bad, affects your little girl. I know full well your character is sufficiently strong to shun anything that would harm you & knowing how I dislike it, even were you tempted, believe you would resist it for my sake. My dear boy, I have full confidence in you, my own darling & nothing can shake the faith I [illegible] in you, my pet, so you need have no fear in future. if this little cloud which hung over us for a while has given you more insight into my kind, true heart so filled with love for you, it is not without consoling me for the shade which overshadowed me for some days. I trust however, that it will never reappear & that you will forget you fancied I misunderstood my poor fellow! So you do not wish me to wait two years? Well, if you are very, very good I may be ready before. I certainly never intended mentioning about Lex when first it happened,

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but as he would [illegible] no denial and threatened to go immediately to my father, the secret had to be divulged. Thank you, my own love, for your trust in me & I hope you will never have reason to change your good opinion of your little girl. Still, my pet, you must not expect to find me perfect – I am so far from it, that I will dread the day of the rude awakening which is sure to come, if you do not realize how faulty I am, so please do not expect too much. You need not dread the ordeal as much as you say. They must think everything nice of you & are prepared for it, as I never tire speaking of my pet. I was lamenting today that you had not chosen a wife with more money as I in fact have none & feel sorry for you - but, I will endeavor to make up for it in every other way, my darling, & do my best not to give cause for regret at its absence. as I said once before, all I have is my heart with its deep, true love & devotion, the most priceless gem a woman can give to the man she loves & Heaven knows all mine is yours! – Do you know I do not believe I shall play one game of whist before you are my partner at it? They do not care for cards here, & consequently we never have them - music is our usual pastime & every one enjoys it. My love for you should not make you sad, darling. on the contrary, you should think very much of yourself for it, as I really never imagined I could possibly care for any one, as I do for you & time only increases the affection. I do not know what shall become of me ere we meet at the rate I am going! – I am glad you believe distance would cause no change in me. You remember when you were quietly smoking your pipe that last evening in Dunmore you asked me “not to give you up” – You little thought the solemn resolution I took when giving you the promise. I determined that if Papa objected to our union I should never call anyone else my husband.

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I did not tell you at the time, judging it best to leave you in ignorance for a while. I had confidence in myself, knowing the strength of the love I feel for

you. Well, if you pray for me, many a short prayer is breathed for you my pet, during the busy hours of the day & how my thoughts fly back to you. The long distance which separates us is travelled over very often & I, unknown to you, are very near if my eyes could only see where my heart is! You will have learnt by now what I think of the time you mention for your leave – I too think it far better to wait until you have finished all your work, in order that you may have nothing to worry you. I will be sufficient to annoy you, I am sure & you will think so too – had you to occupy your mind with your duties, it would take away half the pleasure of your trip east & as you come so very seldom the least you can have is to be free from trouble of that sort. Mrs. W.'s chaff did annoy me somewhat, as I fancied you were fooling me, just to see what I was made of. I then determined you should not believe me soft or credulous, no matter how much I thought of you; so when I sometimes imagined you might care for me, the idea would be soon changed when I recalled to memory “that you were a great flirt, a great beau, very fond of ladies society etc”. So you find I have given you several [posers] to answer. I do not remember them, dear. this last I admit was one, but I wanted to know if you really could have loved Mrs. Mac, so asked you – I think both Lex & yourself will be well suited in the choice you have made, as he loves to be consulted about everything & Mrs. Mac does that – I would not like to trouble you about small matters, so should use my own good judgment & then tell you what I had done. if wrong, you would tell me, just as I expect you to do, when right. A kind of respect or anything else you choose to call it may come after marriage, to persons who did not care very much for each other before, but not love – at least, it does not seem possible to me, nor are you inclined to think it. I trust your love is such that nothing will change it for I never could be happy, if I thought you had ceased to care for me. You might succeed in hiding it from others, but never from your little girl. I do not think I will be as Mrs. Mac was for the three months – she will be there, then I am acquainted with several persons & best of all, I will be with my darling – what more can I wish for? I may be a little lonely, but you will forgive me, knowing my great, warm heart. You were right not to lay siege to the castle too soon. The doubts

which assailed us both only make it sweeter now – though it punished me to leave you, rather than hurt my pride by letting you fancy I cared one iota for you, I would go to the piano & find consolation in some of my sweet songs, sung only to the one whom I had already commenced to hold so dear! I too am trying hard to be good for your sake my pet, & pray God to bless us both in every way. You will smile when told about my old admirer – his wife is wrong to keep an eye on me. Will you believe I have seen him but once alone since his marriage & he profited of the occasion to air his grievances – he married more for money you see & was disappointed, as his wife's father has not given her one cent since the event. Too bad, is it not? I really have been wicked enough to laugh at him many times since to myself. I always defend him, when others speak ill of him. I have never tried in any way to meet or seek his society, & he has been married four years, so his wife has no need to be anxious.

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I would not bother myself about him, in any way. I received Mrs. Mac's letter & proposed writing her last evening, but was too tired & I devote Tuesday to you & would not neglect for any one - however, I will write her soon. Your letter was far from being a foolish one, so you must not say that again. mine are as much, if not far more so than yours are, my own pet so you must not disparage them in any way. I love them. They are preparing a grand Mass for Easter – someone spoke of having me sing, but have heard nothing more of it for some time so cannot say whether I will or not. I will have left Macleod four months on the 4th and it seems so long sometimes – at others so short! – any way I have nearly eight months to live in hopes, ere I see your dear face once more – when one looks forward, it looks very far away but, one can look back & find it has passed very quickly. if we can only be spared to each other for many years! God grant it may be so! life without you!!! it would kill me too. Well, my own true love, it is late so your little girl may kiss good night & wish you many happy dreams. I was with

you for a long time in dreamland last night & was loth to leave you, my pet.

Wednesday, April 3rd, I have just received your nice short letter written on the 26th & looked forward to perusing it with great delight. Of course, when I do not hear from you, I shall know it is because you are on the move all the time, so let the fact not worry you. You have sufficient serious causes without that being added to the number. I was thinking yesterday, it would be a good idea, my pet, to have about a foot wide painted around the floors in our dining room & parlor; brown would be nice. Then when we get our carpets

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if perchance we should decide on large rugs, the floor would be ready – a border left uncovered they say hinders the moths from causing too much havoc. You will find me a very practical little girl, will you not darling? if all is ready, it will not take so long to fix the house, & Mrs. Mac would interest herself in getting a room or two prepared a few days ahead, as if it were done too long before; the mice might enjoy themselves at our expense & I know there were a number of them in the house when Mrs. N. lived there. You see what kind of a girl you have chosen for a wife, but reality does not prevent me from loving you just as much. Mrs. Mac was speaking to me of house linen – now, my pet, if you care for me to purchase what I think necessary I will do so & have it all made up ready for use, when I am not very busy. Whenever you can spare the money to get it, send it & I will do the best I can, as the quantity to select from & the price will be better in Montreal than we could get in Winnipeg or elsewhere. if you prefer to wait until later & get it with me, say so, only it would be nice to have as little to do as possible when we go into our own little home. I could not get too much of your society pet, & if I have a great deal to see to in the sewing line, it will deprive me of many a ride or drive with my own dear Boy. I merely suggest what I think & so leave the matter in your hands. You must not fancy I will not be happy, pet, for as I said last night, have I not you with

all your deep, kind love to comfort me & make up for all I leave here? I do not fear & go to you with pleasure, knowing you will always do whatever is in your power to

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make my life what it should be. Do you know it is said if a person talks in his sleep & you hold his little finger & question him, he is sure to answer – I will try it & not tell you when, just to test the truth of it, so prepare. I never have been known to talk in slumbers, still the love which exists may cause me to respond “to the music of your voice”. You may rest assured I shall tell you all for will you not be all in all to me? I am charmed no fault could be found with your management of the district & post & it rewards you for your trouble. I was several times at Rideau Hall & found things just as the Comr. says & came away disgusted. it was during Lord [Lausdinn’s] term of office – if Steel hearts were as yours, my pet, then I want Steele’s heart forever – surely you will not refuse me that? they are best after all when the magnet is sufficiently strong to attract them well. No! it is better we parted when we did – when we do enjoy each other’s society in Macleod, no one will have any remark to make & when you are in my home here we are so accustomed to see two persons together that we are not always on the qui vive. I am rather touchy you know, & I cannot forget remarks made on the spur of the moment, though I can forgive. [So] your horse has turned out well. I like him & enjoyed caressing him for his dear riders sake. I wonder if he will recognize me when I return & we go out for our first ride! – My own pet, I hope you do not fancy I wish you to deprive yourself of any pleasure? – on the contrary, enjoy yourself when you can, as I have often told you, my own one. It must have been very, very late when you wrote your last, having had such a very busy day. Did the Comr. make any remarks about the alterations I desired in the house? he may have found me hard to please, you see. I am sure you enjoyed your whist at C. Wood’s – you remember our last? When he was so sure there was nothing between us,

as we behaved so well – why! you took me out of the wagon that night for the first time – I recall it often to memory, I assure you, my darling. You sometimes helped me out, but that night I rested in midway between the wagon & the ground – Where?! – Mamma has just received a letter from Grandmamma in which she says, she will leave San Francisco as soon as the snow & ice have completely disappeared in Montreal. she is tired of that life & will feel at home when under Mrs. Mac’s roof once more. Sometimes, I fancy it will take a great deal to persuade her to return next winter. You see if she had a lady with her, it would be so different. I fear my darling will find it takes any amount of money to furnish our little home & wish heartily I could help it him. If you had as much to expect as Lex has, it would be different, as Mrs. Mac will have money. You will be surprised when you hear what a peculiar will Grandmamma’s father made, by which the eldest ~~have~~ get nothing; Mamma says “because they had the privilege [sic] of seeing him” – she is the eldest, consequently gets nothing – this is, entre nous of course, as I know you are discreet. Grandmamma has given Mrs. Mac a great deal & is to give ever so much more when she goes up this time, bringing all the furniture she reserved for a house she intended keeping, but which idea has since given up, so Mrs. Mac comes in for it, as she is to reside with her during the summer. Lex is very lucky, & I sincerely wish I could bring you as much as his wife did. however, it will not prevent us from being happy, which is what we desire. Well, pet, my letter is stupid so

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I will write no more. I am dull today my thoughts wool-gathering & with you. Au revoir, my own darling pet – write soon to the one who loves you so dearly - & delights in calling herself

Your own little

Girl

Baby keeps coming to me all the time and disturbs me with her prattle – she is trying so hard to talk & succeeds pretty well, but being a girl that is not to be wondered at – they are so gifted in that way!

Maye.

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