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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

[pg 1]

Vaudreuil
Feb 17th / 89.

My own darling Sam,

The dear letter you wrote me on the 7th was received on Friday & read over & over again since its arrival. The Wednesday that I felt so neglected was the only time you missed a mail owing to the suffering your teeth caused you as well as the numerous duties the Lieut Governor's visit was attended with. Of course I quite understand, pet, it was not your fault, so trust you will say no more about it, as I am now fully convinced that you will always write when such a thing is possible. If I am as much in your mind as you are in mine, I am sorry for you. I think of you so constantly that waking it make [sic] me sad. awake or asleep you seem forever with me!! You will scarce beleive [sic] when I say, that I really never thought I was capable of so much affection. it is new to me & in consequence, I feel all the more keenly no doubt. Did I love you less, I should not so much care about the great distance that separates us: but, you do seem so very, very far away from me, my own darling!! You now know what days to

[/pg 1]

[pg 2]

expect a letter from me as I write regularly also. I only hope you will continue to enjoy the epistles you are favored with & love me better as time goes on. I am always afraid to put too much in them for fear other eyes than my darling's would be indiscreet enough to peruse them unknown to him. but, stop; I hear you say, what more could she write I wonder? I will

begin to think it also, & perhaps restrain my feelings a wee bit more - still, it is sweet to tell you how much I love you, darling. I trust I seemed nice & recalled to memory many scenes dear to you when in dreamland the night you speak of. Was it a case of "Thy voice is near me in my dreams?". I hope so, for my own sake. the song says more "For though I listen to thy voice, they face I never see". it is that way my pet, & will be for some time to come. You say we will enjoy plenty riding when we return next autumn – do you consider that January is an autumn month? for your leave would extend to about the beginning of the next year, would it not? You do love to tease I beleive [sic] & are having your revenge for all I gave you about the two years particularly, I begin to think. You remember our last ride, but still the position

[/pg 2]

[pg 3]

you assumed twice during that homeward canter, or rather walk, as it was at the time, will then be no novelty. I did not fall gracefully, & gave you full benefit of the whole performance. You on the contrary dazed me & frightened me so that for a moment I lost presence of mind & only thought of how seriously you might be hurt & for me - that was a bitter reproach & it came to my mind very often afterwards – but for me it would not have happened & you know such is the case. Then I knew how dear you were. There certainly lurks a spirit of mischief in me & the sorrow was interwoven with a dash of it when I saw you walk ahead of me & assure me you were all right though in the depth of my heart of hearts, I had a firm conviction you were more seriously injured than you would [own?] to me. however, my darling, it had a good ending & the love then slumbering awoke & my heart was wholly yours, though I contended seriously against it for long & kept you a whole week awaiting your answer, for fear that you had not reflected on all the difficulties we might meet with. I told you before love would never tire me as I cannot get too much of it, & love should only increase after marriage, not diminish. I feel that the love I bear you, will, with your

kindness, augment a hundred fold in the future, when you will really know whether you will be disappointed in me or not. I am pleased to hear Mr. Mac P__ is making himself agreeable & that he likes you; but, all men do that, darling, so why should he be an exception?. I know not why Neale abuses you. he must be very ungrateful to act so to you - his wife's illness should make him more careful, as he does not know when he may need assistance, in any way. My sister Louise asked me the other day if the Commissioner liked you. I asked the reason – “because Willie (Mr. Drayner) says he did not act as if he did”. She said “the Commissioner did not say so, but acted that way”. I know of the words that have passed between you several times so this is not news to you. he must be [just] however, if he has any pretence to be called a man. You know now that the photo's [sic] came all right & what I think of them, so will pass on to another subject. So my pet was choosing my saddle when he wrote – how good he is! Who told you we called Lex & yourself “the Pets?” did Mrs. Mac give me away for somehow or other, I feel that you know it. if you did not, you do now, & will laugh at me for telling the secret. Your little girl will be a perfect ignoramus when she returns with you & will put your patience to the test once more when obliged to resume the lessons. So you think I do not believe [sic]

[/pg 3]

[pg 4]

when you say I ride pretty well – at first, I thought you merely flattered me – now I believe [sic] you know me sufficiently well to tell me the truth did you think otherwise. I never fancied your friends imposed upon you; it was merely your love for me that blinded your eyes to my many faults. Mamma says “there is no use saying anything, as I have decided to go so far - luckily the man is a good one, else she would have fought hard against it”. The distance being so great, visits will be few & far between. That makes her sorry you see, but I console her by telling her that you promised I should come now & then. You must have been surprised at my mentioning

the iron beds at Mrs. Neale's – it is because Mrs. Mac told me they were A.1. & that they were the best kind for the country. After mature deliberation I concluded that they did not make a house bedroom look as pretty, so ventured to give my opinion, fearing you might buy more than one & later not be able to dispose of it, if we wished to: so I hope you do not think less of your little girl for speaking of every thing as I do, but not seeing you, I must write. I do not sing much for every song brings up some thought of you – different occasions on which I sang them & the many scenes they recall to mind, are more than

[/pg 4]

[pg 5]

I can bear. When at the piano, I fancy I see or hear you breathe quite near me & I generally cease after a couple of songs. I am glad Mr. Barnes congratulated you & believe [sic] him sincere. Women can act a part my pet, when it suits them & be perfect hypocrites too – The Majah! Is really very insincere when she says she will be delighted to see me return & etc for I do not believe [sic] her nor do you. You saw her behave very politely the last evening I was in Macleod & can consequently, judge for yourself. I feel perfectly certain that I am the innocent cause of the Allan estrangement – but I do not care a fig. † Your idea of them not [being] very high, I need not be very intimate. I am rather surprised at Dr. K. though, in a way; but my opinion of him was formed some time after I had been up & will not likely change, but for some very good reason, for I dislike him. Your rudeness might have passed unnoticed, had there not been such a soft feeling in my heart towards you, which you invariably turned to hate when you acted as you sometimes did; but, you never forgot you were a gentleman & speaking to a lady. I am a little touchy perhaps, but you must excuse me, as I will not be so any more, towards the one who has my whole heart in his keeping. You are older &

[/pg 5]

[pg 6]

wiser than Elmes, that is why Julia made a confident [sic] of you – besides can be very discreet when it pleases my pet to be so. I never made a confident [sic] of a man who had not something to do with the subject I spoke of, so cannot say from experience whether they chose a goose or not. I look upon you as being a duck so trust you will not think yourself a goose any more. Why did you go so far away from the nice girls in the East? a roveing spirit you had to satisfy & a fortune to seek? Think of all I should have lost, had I not followed your footsteps to the far away country you have lived in for so long – a good man is never too plain, for a sensible girl who knows enough to seek for something better than good looks only. Mrs. Zach must have been anything but pleased after the ball. She is rather pretty, but her photo so very flattering, that many were deceived in their expectations – is it not far better for it to be just the reverse, & be found ahead of the picture? Small women always sigh for height you know & how could I be an exception to the generality? I have grown a little in my own estimation, my own pet, since I met you however, & just “reaching to the level of your heart” has made me more satisfied with myself. You suit me darling, in every way & now being more familiar with your size, I do not find you too tall – surely when one woman loves you so dearly, you cannot say you are less thought of than [formally]. You have one great, big heart overflowing with love more to think of you & to bless you, darling. If you become very erect so as not to lose caste where will I be, when we stand together? Do not fear my mentioning the matter you tell me to keep secret to any one. I understand why Grandmamma wants Lex to come & help her – she intends bringing up a lot of furniture & could not attend to all herself. I hope you said nothing of it. Anything you tell me, concerning the Force, interests me, dear, so tell me all you feel like doing. You meet with a ready, sympathetic listener & willing to hear all you care to say. I do not think myself that “beauty [unadorned] etc” is true & am happy to know it is not your idea – pretty things go towards making a woman appear well in a man’s eyes, especially when he knows her intimately. You will learn later

that is very true & will tell me if I am not right, will you not? I am happy to know Mrs. Mac received mine of the 20th [illegible] all O.K. as she will see I do not neglect her too much. I would not do so for the

[/pg 6]

[pg 7]

world my pet, she was kind to me & surely knows me better than to imagine such a thing possible – we never had any very serious quarrel in all the years we have known each other, except one or two, which later on I will detail to you. Say nothing to her of course about this. Some things are secrets, & a woman's life sometimes has a few – not her's [sic] you know, but mine. only do not go & fancy something disadvantageous to your own little girl, for you will not think so when you know the in's [sic] and out's [sic] of all. My sister, Mrs. Herbert is still away & will be absent another fortnight I suppose. We miss them very much. This time next year, I have no doubt we will be together, will we not? Will it not seem strange to you my pet, to have a woman near you all the time – some men consider them a worry you know, but you have leisure enough to get accustomed to the idea & hope you will be unlike the others, in more than one respect. Mr. Drayner is not here today – he left for Quebec this a.m & will be absent some six weeks. Louise will be rather lonely. They see each other every two weeks sometimes oftener & write every second day. My pet is so far that I cannot see him & write

[/pg 7]

[pg 8]

twice a week, but the letters are lengthy in consequence. perhaps they make make [sic] your mouth water when I speak of the many kisses I send – that is why you do not find them dry & stale. I will never call myself “your disappointed little Girl” any more, as it seems to have pained my own old pet & I did not mean to do so, I assure you, so forgive me, will you not, dear? The weather is milder, in fact it rained part of this morning, but we

have had a spell of pretty cold weather. Mamma & I are going to make a few calls this afternoon, the first she makes since poor old Grandpapa's death last April – she was his particular pet & was equally fond of him. she misses him sadly & has not yet become reconciled to his loss, never speaking of him without her eyes filling with tears. Love is very strong with me, pet, & if you have nothing else you have an immense lot of affection from your little girl who dearly loves to be called your own. Well, my darling, it is time for me to prepare to go out, so I will say bye-bye. God bless my own dear boy, & make me worthy of the love of his good, kind, honest heart. With very many sweet kisses, I am, always

Your

Own dear little Girl

[/pg 8]

[pg 9]

While reading this over I unfortunately let a drop of ink fall on the second page – excuse the other mistakes pet, like a dear boy, & attribute it them all to a woman's failing, talking, which I often do while writing you. The blot will be a kiss, & kissing you very fondly & sweetly, will leave you for tonight.

Your

Own Maye

[/pg 9]