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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil
Feb 24th / 89.

My own darling Sam,

I have just come in from church & having a few moments before dinner I commence my letter; though my fingers are rather numb, the very pleasant task they are performing will soon warm them up sufficiently to enable them to trace the words I wish to write to my own darling today. A short note enclosed in a letter to Mrs. Mac. will have surprised you ere this reaches your hands. I wish to show my pet how often I think of him so thought it would give ~~you~~ him pleasure to read a few words. I never imagined for a moment that you would deprive me of a piano, but such things are luxuries one can very well live without for some time, so had you not been able to give me one now, I knew it would be because you had so much else to buy & that you were fully convinced your little girl was very reasonable & understood how matters were. How much I thank you I never can attempt to express. later I may

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be in a measure, better able to tell my hearty thanks & will endeavor to lull my darling into many a sweet sleep, by the magic touch of the instrument united to my voice, always ready to charm him. I found out it must be one of your nephews now residing in Winnipeg whom Miss P. admired & Miss Herbert met as well. never mind dear, the good every one says is of you & no other of your name being well known to a number of Montreal fellows.

How happy your dear words make me, my pet & how often I have read over the paragraph in your last in which you express the deep love you feel for me! I hope you will never regret giving me such an amount of affection & that I will prove in every way worthy of it! Last night I had a wee fit of the blues & though I should not tell you, sobbed myself to sleep. What a child she is! I hear you say - all for nothing too, but a fancy flashed through my mind, after I had read your last previous to retiring. What if he should live to repent marrying a Catholic? Some might exercise all the influence they possibly could & make you see things in a different light, now that I am far away from my own

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pet, & endeavor to change things somewhat. Well, dear the idea made me so very unhappy, that I found relief in tears, with no one to comfort me near – no one to confide my trouble to! one little word from you would have set all right, but I am deprived of that consolation! I know you will feel very much like scolding me & attribute this to lack of confidence & trust, but I cannot help it, my own pet – all the love I have for you & you have for me I know & beleive [sic], still unpleasant thoughts will come to disturb the calm, sweet dream. this morning, I dreamt of you. You were having a very large parade, & were passing on the highway just in front of our house – as you reached one side of our grounds, you stopped & turned to speak. I heard the sounds made by your voice but could not catch the words – just when I awoke & was heartbroken to have you fade entirely away without being able to say one word & tell you I was near. When I have you, my darling, I shall not treasure the photo's [sic] as I now do – the original is better far! but being compelled to live without a sight of his dear face for so long, do you wonder at the care I bestow on the picture? at the many sweet kisses pressed on those quiet lips, which do not even attempt to return “sweets to the sweet” – ? I trust you feel better now & that your health will continue to improve – anxiety about my own one is not the least of the many trials I

undergo! If you learn, you know how happy it will make me to give a few lessons & you are too young yet, to speak of going down hill & etc – my devotion will be such, that you will feel a boy again & such a dear boy!! I will spoil you fearfully & you will regret that you did not marry long ago, when you realize what a true woman is! Mr. W. found a sympathetic listener when he confided his woes to you! So many men judge women by some whom they have had the misfortune to meet & become intimate with! if they are frivolous, vain, & not deserving honest love, all of our sex are thought the same & condemned as unworthy of possessing or giving pure love, just because a few, undeserving of being ranked with the majority, have been found wanting. I regret very much to hear Mrs. Wilson has been ill & hope she will speedily recover her health – living where she does, with so few around her, & very often only her own thoughts for company, does not

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tend to enliven a person who has been accustomed to the noise & stir of a large city & must have some effect upon her – she will find it more pleasant in Macleod, being nearer Mrs. C. Wood, who is very fond of her & will prove a good friend. We will come down to the next carnival, if by chance we are together then. it will not be for a few years, as the merchants are disgusted at the result of the last, the hotels being the only places where money was made. Of course, the weather was a great draw-back, people arriving at the end of the week only instead of at the beginning & missing all the sights. We have had intense cold, yesterday being dreadful – twenty or more below zero with a high wind & the snow drifting so, that one could scarcely see their way. Notwithstanding, Mrs. Hubert returned with her baby from Montreal. it was not so stormy in the city else they never would have returned on such a day. however, they reached home safely, so all our worry was for nothing – as we feared they might freeze driving home from the station, which is a mile from our home. As for the furniture, you know

my pet, if you see anything you like, get it – it will be sure to please

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your little girl. I propose getting it here, as you alluded to the matter yourself the day we travelled to Dunmore together & spoke of it, you remember? What a long talk we had that day & what an insight you gave me into your character & all you would give up & do for me. Though I should dearly love to show you how good a nurse I can be still I trust my own darling will be free from illness for many a long day to come. You have had sufficient in that way of late, with your little girl so far away, so, it is time for you to turn over a new leaf & be better than ever before. I have commenced a bottle “Burdock Blond Bitters” which they will persist in trying to convince me I require – it is not unpalatable, so the penance is not too severe. Alice & Mamma are indulging also, but as we have been only a few days at it, cannot say whether it will do us any good. I am not sick at all, so do not go & imagine I am. Every one finds me looking so well & believe [sic] the North-west air agrees with me almost better than what I have breathed all my life. If they only knew! the air up there is beneficial, but did I not love some one up in that distant country, who is “all the world to me,” I never would praise

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it up as I now do – it’s the man I love, not the place. Mrs. Hubert tells me Montreal is very gay. Not very many large halls, but small parties & euchre every night. Ottawa is gay, but does not tempt me – later, I may go – that is next year, but this winter I remain where I am. The baby has grown so much & toddles where ever she wishes – she puts me in mind of a little old woman!!!. Mrs. Mac will be pleased to have Grandmamma reside with her & I hope she will remain long in Macleod next door to you. Mrs. Neale was very mean not to give her even a flower, for I think Mrs. M. was always kind

to her & Lex as well: but where obligation is due, ingratitude is usually met with, so one must not be surprised at anything these days. You have said nothing of what he owed you & whether you succeeded in getting anything from you. You will say I am very curious, but everything about you interests me, you know, so you must not wonder at & forgive my asking. My sister, Mrs. H. met Mr. Willie Sharples in Montreal who said you were a very dear friend of his & praised you very highly – one more feather in your cap, my boy!!..My brother, Auguste is home from college – this is his last year & studying too much has made his eyes weak, so he has come for a fortnight's rest. he is such a dear good boy & we all are fond of him. Mr. Drayner wrote Louise that he had met two old men from the Force, who spoke very highly of both yourself & Freddy – the former I beleive [sic] possible, but what can be said of the latter? I am rather incredulous where he is concerned. March will be here now – do you not find that time is fleeting? Of course, you are kept so busy, you can scarcely realize how speedily it passes, still when you have a moment to devote to your little girl you cannot fail to note that the months are flying rapidly & that September will be with us, before you will have fully made up to your mind whether to come for her, or not. I fear you will find my letter very stupid but I feel that way today & trust you will be lenient towards me. Mr. Huot must have written you by now & told you how he likes his quarters. You still continue taking your meals at the mess, I suppose – where is your den just now, as I hear you have a very nice desk & fancy easy chairs to indulge in day-dreams, whenever you feel so inclined! I hope you will take good care of yourself & be as comfortable as possible.

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You deserve it, my pet, & must become accustomed to luxury, before I come to you: else you would not enjoy it half as much after. Does the Majah! seem to appreciate Mr. Macp_'s good looks? I feel sorry that you are set aside & you do too, though too proud to give in! does she still

expect her sister in April? I wonder if she is as pretty as Mrs. Z_ and & as tall! The bachelor's [sic] had better beware, she may captivate one, as I did! Mr. W. who you say can be attracted & attract as well! – he might fall a victim to woman's wiles & be easily won although his first experience was anything but reassuring. how eagerly a man desires to try again, even when he has been severely tested & met with deceit!!. How is Mr. Campbell getting on? luckily your climate is not as cold as ours. Miss [Heudrie] was in Montreal for the carnival. Has Mrs. Neale come East with her husband? she intended doing so when I left, but they are so very undecided kind of people, one never knows what they will do next. She must regret Mrs. Pritchard's marriage, as she was very useful in every way. Have you seen the bride or groom yet? [obscured] seem happy? do you envy him? she [obscured] home now & that is something to a girl

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in her very dependent position. How is Mr. Hilton? do you see him often? I fancy he is keeping his eye on you for fear you might go astray! am I not right? it can do no harm, as long as he does not seek to persuade you that you are too good & should withdraw a little. Then I might object to his visiting his dear friend too frequently. I have a photo of Mrs. Mac_'s parlor, which you no doubt have seen – the arm chair is one of the first things in view & how often it brings back the many hours I occupied it with my darling near. My own pet, how dearly I love you! I often wonder if I may not find I have been dreaming & the sight of your letters with their many loving words, convince me that I am really your own little girl, & that all your warm love is mine! – The other day I happened to say “that you were lonely” & my father, man-like feels for you & said “I do not wonder, when you are so far away from him” – he has gone over to the enemy who has come to rob him of one of his few treasures, most completely & capitulates without much ado. Well, my darling, I will leave you now. My letter is so

[uninteresting?] that you will be glad to see the end of it. With my heart's warmest

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love & as many sweet kisses as you should care to take were you near, believe [sic] me, ever

Your

own loving

Maye

What do you think of the enclosed? Are the words not very true? I am fond of it & there always seems something meant for my very self in the lines!

You believe [sic] in fate I know so will appreciate them as well as

Your own dear

Little Girl