

2008.1.1.1.1.50

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil,
July 2nd / 89.

My own darling pet,

Yours of the 23rd came in today & really contributed more to my getting somewhat better of the fearful pain in my chest, which has troubled me for three days now, than all the medicine I have been taking. Yesterday I was compelled to remain in bed most of the day, as I was suffering very much. It is what ailed me in Sept. about the time of the concert, only having remedies near at hand, I will be better sooner. it must be dyspeptia [sic], I feel sure. You will begin to think your choice has fallen on a very sickly little girl, but I am not steel(e) as yet, so cannot expect to be always well. if that were the case, I might forget I am but a frail woman!!.. however, you may be pleased to know I am on the mend & trust to have quite recovered in a day or two. Am charmed to learn my own pet was so pleased with my long letter, but, I cannot promise such lengthy

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ones often. You gave me an opportunity of detailing a circumstance well remembered & it being the first occasion, was not lost. It has been exceedingly easy to spoil you, my darling boy, if I have done so unawares. if the rain brought you it might rain for six months & I should never tire of it, my pet. as it does not, it wearies me, not to mention others who are put in bad humor by the constant patter of the rain, for it falls almost every day – we really needed it this afternoon, it being intensely hot & the air was cooler after a very heavy shower. Where would I turn for consolation if not to the one I love & who loves me in return, when I need it sorely? I know where I

shall meet with all I seek in coming to you, pet, - it is but the beginning, my darling one, it will give you an idea of all that will be expected in the future. We will make the Compact & in a year from the time we are married tell each other if we are disappointed – agreed, is it not? – I am very sure no one will covet or envy you the treasure you now prize so much

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& am willing to bet, some even pity you, for caring for such a decided girl. Do you know that when you told me you were going away for change of scene & air, you seemed so much in earnest, “my heart sank low, from weight of woe”, & I then knew I could not part from you, without righting myself in your eyes a little – that invitation about making a fourth was a gentle way of trying to find out the true state of your mind, for I was sure if you had determined to have nothing more to say to me, that you would refuse. When Lex shortly after came in & laughing spoke of it, I too found hope strong & was convinced that it had been taken in the spirit in which it was given. Your catching my sly words evidently meant for the game, but intended for you alone, also helped me believe I had not offended you past pardon. Had you really gone without my seeing you again, I should have resorted to strategy & all being fair in love & war, should have seen you once more somewhere – if not in the west, some place down east – no stone would have been left unturned, if only to prove I ~~am~~ was really not the frivolous girl, my conduct might have led you to imagine. However, it has turned out well so far & will I trust, continue. Mrs. Mac must have missed her Lex very much during his ten days absence. he no doubt went to the Crow’s Nest detachment where we camped on our way to & from the Mts, but where I did not rest, owing to my fear of the wind & rats which were there in numbers. Mrs. M. must think you very devoted, if for her sake you remain in the N. W. The lady who said she would have fainted rather than speak to Mrs. Deane as I did, cannot have much pluck, for I said very few words, though they were to the point. Mr. C. Wood several times told me the young men required a young lady, such as I, to keep them in trim – one not afraid to speak her mind! – I had my motives in mentioning your

kindness to my brother – it was to let him know all I thought of you & you of me. That if he behaved

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as he should, the day might come when some body nice might think as much of him & I intended to encourage him in keeping his resolutions. notwithstanding the great desire I feel to continue conversing with my pet, I must cease, as stooping over fatigues me more than I can bear at present. however the poor effort I have made will prove to my darling that I have thought of him. Good night, my own one, & pleasant dreams of your own warmhearted little girl. Wednesday. This evening, I feel well enough to have a long chat with my darling, you may be happy to learn. I hope this hateful spell has passed for some time, as it makes me weak for a while. I tried my best to continue last evening, but had to give up, as you saw by the last words I penned to you. So my pet felt above writing love letters! Well, you have taken kindly to them & what is more, write very loving ones – if you could only imagine what great pleasure they give me, you would be more than satisfied with the results of your labor. They may prove very

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pleasant, as they are a change from the constant routine of business letters!. I would not like you to follow Lex's example in all things, but he certainly can be very attentive to his wife when he wishes. No! it is wise of Providence to have made the future unknown to us, for many days & even years of bliss would be robbed of all their happiness, were the day of separation known!. the knowledge of trials in store would turn many a human being crazy & even make them put an end to their existence, in preference to watching & waiting for the dawn of the evil day. I am delighted that the Comr. displayed such good taste in the choice of the paper & hope it will only serve to bring out my many good points when it forms the background for my dainty self reposing in a nice arm chair with my own darling pet near as he used to be. I could not have had you to rock me, even had there been any nice shade trees, for you would not have

deigned to do so, when the trees still had their foliage. it

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it was not till later in the autumn that you even gave me the privilege [sic] of fancying you might perchance enjoy the task. Of course, had I not seen the country, I would be troubling my poor head wondering what kind of a place it is & all that, but having seen it, know just what to expect, so will be far more contented, than were it otherwise. I succeeded very well in hiding the cause of the pistol episode, often as you asked the reason I displayed such temper until now, did I not? You hardly imagined I would notice such conduct & restrain my tongue I suppose. pride & at the same time, a certain delicacy of feeling made me act as I did. You must have found my scruples very easy to overcome, my pet. be candid now & tell me truly, if I am not right? I fancied your rudeness was owing to your eagerness to prevent me from thinking for one instant that you cared a pin for me, & even that thought provoked me beyond words many a time. If you say you have always been in love, they will begin to fancy I

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have only smouldering ashes to keep alight & it takes a great deal of fanning to make that kind burn brightly for even a short time only! so pray beware! & do not make the pastime too difficult for me. I hear the hotel is not a success. The present managers are accustomed to the style of people who desire to come, as they are common, being proprietors of the [Vendonie] restaurant in Montreal, which is, I believe only a third class place. The consequence is, that ladies & gentlemen come for a day only, then leave disgusted. it is situated in a most beautiful spot on the edge of the Ottawa, built under the most lovely trees & is a very pretty building. I have not been down there once yet & it has no attraction whatever for me: until it changes hands, it will not pay, that is sure. You hate the winter so much my pet down East, that as I told you before, perhaps you would prefer putting off your trip until next June, in order to enjoy it thoroughly [sic]. if so, just tell me & all will be as you desire. not having been down

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for so long, you should choose a nicer season for your visit. Your conversations were different to what I had been accustomed to, for you know every one was not as loving as you were – some few times the subject may have been on the [tapis], but it happened about only once with the one person, the subject being tabooed after that. You I encouraged to frequent repetition, so I must be the guilty party. Well, my pet, I now turn to your dear little letter of the 25th received today, which although short is very sweet, bringing as it does, full & complete assurance of your pardon for the hasty words you fancied I had penned to you, in anger. My roses did their duty well & were they near, I should press them once more to my lips, just as I did, ere they went on their mission, to thank them for their success. I caressed them & gazed at them long & ardently before they were deprived of air, as I knew your dear eyes would be the next to see them. if they had tongues, what sweet thoughts they would whisper to my pet of the love which he has [now] & the true heart which is devoted to him only, though so far away. Lex was absent for a few days & not for ten as you anticipated – love has wings!!.... I remember quite well the torn braid on the patrol jackets – am I likely to forget anything that concerns you? Yes, in a way you began to thaw out that day. The first time I had an idea you noticed anything that I did, was when you turned after Woolly had been speaking to me, made such a pair of eyes at me & asked who he was? I then casually mentioned to Mrs. Mac that he had found a saddle for me & you seemed to heed what I was saying. it struck me as being peculiar that you took even that much interest in what I did, but nothing more; then your not speaking after the concert banished all my cherished hopes! – You really missed the Masonic dinner my pet, partly for me! it is kind of you, for any amuse-

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amusement is welcome in a place [like] Macleod & I appreciate your spirit of self-sacrifice, I assure you. If “love rules the world,” it shall rule our home, as you will be such a willing victim the task will be quite easy. What

value I attach to your warm deep love & how I should thank Heaven so much has fallen to my lot. Many a woman sighs for only half of that amount & would consider her life perfect bliss, were she favored with what she desires, but alas! she toils & slaves for one who cannot appreciate her life of sorrow & care! – I hope the fire was not as near as you feared & that you were not compelled to lose your rest, owing to its proximity. Mrs. Mac must have been frightened. We are having too much rain to apprehend any danger of that sort – water tis plentiful. the heat today was intense – it is much warmer this summer than the last. Mr. Cowie & his youngest son were here for a while yesterday: the farmer teased me

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& would persist in saying heart disease troubled me. he is not coming to the hotel after all, as his son has to study German all summer owing to his failure in that language in passing his exams – at the Toronto University, where he is studying Arts. He will likely come up a few times however during the season to enjoy a picnic of which he is very fond & is splendid at the head of them. My brother John spent three days with us at the end of the month – he is clerking in a large dry goods store & is such a dear boy – he will be up every Saturday at two for July & August & enjoys it, I assure you, being very fond of [boating] – he is a fine, steady boy of twenty two & a great favorite with every person. I am so anxious for you to meet them all & hope you will like them, though they are young. Well, my own old pet, this a pretty long letter, though very badly written, partly caused by hurry & partly by weakness. I hope you will make every allowance for it.

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With very many sweet kisses & warm love from one whom you have really taught the strength & depth of the truest & strongest of human passions, believe me, with the hope that you are quite well, Ever
Your own affectionate
little Girl.

I am much better so do not worry about me. I shall have completely recovered long ere this reaches you from

Your own

Maye.

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