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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil
May 7th / 89.

My own darling Sam,

Your dear letter of the 28th reached me today, & though I have been rather ill from the very bad cold which troubles me, I feel like having a short chat with my own pet, whose confidence & trust in me, I so fully appreciate. I believe I never so narrowly escaped inflammation of the lungs, judging from the way I have felt, but thanks to kind care & doctoring up, I feel better this evening. I have not been compelled to remain in bed for I could not endure that, but really was rather nervous for a day or more. To crown all, we this morning received a telegram from the proprietor of the hotel in Granby, where my eldest brother, [Unwin] boards, being Inland Revenue officer there, telling us he was very ill & requesting Papa to go immediately – as all the passenger trains

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had passed down, he succeeded in boarding a freight. he was to send us a message as soon as he reached his destination this evening, at half-past six. You can perhaps imagine what an anxious time we have had, when Papa's telegram has just relieved us. he says "not to be anxious. he will remain a few days" – nothing more, still it affords us more consolation to know it is not serious. I feared my letter of the 19th would make you unhappy, but I was so hurt at the time that I could not hide it from my darling. my subsequent letters will have initiated you as to the reason & know you have granted me full pardon for my fault. I must be a very naughty little girl to rebel so, but I can take good advice when there is

reason for it – otherwise, it provokes me & being perhaps rather matter-of-fact sometimes I hate to be told so & as there is a vein of romance in me not visible to every eye, I consider it unjust to be told to be a “little more romantic” when every one does not understand my motive for

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acting or speaking in a certain manner. I have known it would hurt you to hear me speak as I did & has grieved me very often since. When you let one mail pass without writing, I knew my suspicions were verified, but did not blame my pet, as I was punished for my pride. You have a very good idea as to who the culprit is, being convinced it is no one here. I promised to say nothing of it, but being discreet, know I am safe with you, my own one. You were innocent, still were the victim of my wicked feelings & trust you fully forgive me, although as you may have heard, somebody else had the same treat in a more spicy way than my pet was favored with. It is too bad Mrs. Mac cannot accompany Lex, but suppose she does not wish to leave her house for any length of time - if Grandmamma remains in the fall, she will profit of the opportunity & come no doubt. She will find very many changes since her departure, but feel sure she will be more satisfied when she returns West. Yes, my darling, I too wish you could be here, if only for a short time – one can say so much in a few moments!!.. I am pleased to know the book helped pass an afternoon. I hesitated about sending it, not being certain you would care for that style of literature – it is a true story of every day life, hidden from the world as a rule. Some of the works of today are so silly, I find – not worth reading & so very sensational, they give one a peculiar idea of the world & must prejudice the minds of some against the higher classes. I feel sorry for Mrs. K. but having known so little of her mother, am surprised she takes her death so much to heart. I wonder the old Dr. does not feel remorse at his treatment of her – of course, it is an old story, long before I appeared on the scene, so know little of it – still from what I have seen, he must have been very hard to manage. The Comr. is with you today & I trust did not tantalize you too much: I would have enjoyed the display of horsemanship, I am certain. So they

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really had the audacity to send my pony out on duty! I am pleased you found it out & did not desire him to be deseccrated in such a manner. I fear the little rogue had too much of his own way last autumn, so has become lazy in consequence. he will not fear me when I return & will more than probable have forgotten all about the precious burden he so often carried & to whom he, in a way, brought happiness. You cannot imagine how lovely everything is & the air is so heavy with the perfume of the budding trees. the bees are humming the live-long day & all animal life awakening from its long sleep!!! Spring is truly a beautiful season in the country & we enjoy it. Well, my own pet, it is early but as my beauty sleep must be longer than usual, I will say au revoir until tomorrow. with your deep love for me slumbering down in my heart of hearts, I kiss my own darling “Good night & pleasant dreams of his little girl”.

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May 8th. The 30th of April saw you busy answering a letter of mine & your dear missive came to me this morning & was very warmly welcomed, letting me know, my pet had, with his good, kind heart forgiven me what he calls, my “fits of temper”. No, my teeth were not paining me, but they needed attention so I profited of the occasion to pay the dentist a visit. It did me good to have a change no doubt!. Your story of the bet made me laugh. I little knew [Maude] had such a knowledge of my disposition or of yours. You conquered my heart at any rate, & when that is won, there is nothing left worth the winning. It is well people believe us both so peppery – they will take care not to offend in any way, when sure of a hot reception! – I never saw any display of temper from you, darling, though you cannot as much of me. I did not mean to be cross with my pet who is so kind to me, but my wounded feelings got

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the better of me then!. I am pleased to learn the officers quarters will be

“real nice”, as from all I heard, though never treated to a peep into a forbidden realm, they were anything but comfortable. Mrs. Neale will, I fancy, soon tire of Lethbridge when the excitement & novelty wear off & people, becoming accustomed to her presence among them, will drop into the old daily routine & she will find herself in consequence, of no more account than any other lady in the busy little town. She loves to be first in everything & to lead is her one aim in life. She gives no thought to any other subject & being fond of society & admiration, will seek it to the very end. I like her you know, but never could desire her for a sincere friend – her frivolity is more than I can bear!! Mrs. C. Wood is fond of entertaining & seems sincere. Grandmamma likes her & her little attentions, bringing up a few flowers & coming around often pleased her very much. It is a wonder the W’s did not also take a bet upon us – the [sic] were very much interested watching the progress of the case & we were the topic of many a conversation, I know. The young lady I introduced to Mr. Steele was Miss Cheveier, whose father is a merchant in Winnipeg & whom you told me you were acquainted with. Her step-mother was an old teacher of mine at the convent in Ottawa. She was a Nun for a number of years, but being unhappy left & married some time after, an old admirer who had in the meantime, married & become a widower without her knowing the fact. He had a family of several children almost grown up at the time. The second daughter whom I met on my way up, is quite pretty – the one I introduced to Mr. Steele has a pleasing, but not a pretty face. I did not know them until I went west, their step-mother being my friend. Looks after all are not everything,

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& I am glad my darling did not seek that in me: they fade quickly & when they form the foundation of love, it soon totters. Mrs. Zach will always seem lovely to [him] though, just as I hope to be always to you. Outsiders notice a change, but not those who love you, my pet. You ask if I like cherry? Well, to be candid, your matter-of-face little girl will truly say, that real cherry is very expensive – the good imitation looks well, but is hard to keep well

dusted & every scratch shows – it requires a great deal of care & continual rubbing & varnishing. Walnut or something in that style is, I fancy, preferable. You will say I am practical, but, why not when it concerns us both so closely? Plush is very nice, but I fear my pet wishes to make too pretty a nest for his little mate! – I will tell you a joke about the pistol later, not now, so you must not let curiosity get the better of you. It was a killing impression you wished to make

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& have succeeded admirably, I must confess. It proved what a determined man I was to meet & prepared me beforehand, for the consequences. The [pistol [sic]] was on my bed when I returned, just where you had thrown it down in your hurry to spruce up to meet Mrs. Mac, I suppose. “A guilty conscience & etc” was well illustrated in your case at the races. I am sure the other ladies never gave the matter one thought. They were like myself in perfect ignorance of the face that Cupid was at work on a heart of Steel(e) which had, until then been invulnerable. I feel much better today I am glad to tell you & trust to be even more so tomorrow. it seems they wish to listen to the “music of my voice” in church on Sunday evening, though so far I have heard nothing of it – if my cold is not perfectly cured, I will not sing, that is sure. Well, my own old pet, they await my letter to mail it, so will be compelled to kiss “au revoir”. With deepest love for my own darling, which shall

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ever be true to him, believe me, once more,
Your own repentant, loving
little Girl.

Say nothing of Mrs. Cheveier’s having been a nun. She might not like it known & of course such things are better forgotten. Another sweet kiss I give you my own pet, as I leave you.

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