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Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil
March 5th / 89.

My own Darling Sam,

I today had the happiness of receiving another of your dear letters which always bring so much joy with them. I expected it, but dare not hope too much, as the "clerk of the weather" seems to have a slight grudge against me now & then & vents his pique by depriving me of one of the sweetest pleasures a day can convey to me, a letter from the darling I love so truly & so well!. Yours of the 23rd lies open before me & tells me you were disappointed at the nonarrival of the mail. Last week you were favored you must candidly avow, as three letters from your little girl was more than you could expect. Ah! the summer is slowly & surely coming. The days seem to fly, though when a letter fails to come from my pet, I am so anxious for the night to pass as hope has complete power over my heart in the bright morning hours. one can almost live on hope, still ~~wh~~ were the dreams not likely to be realized, despair would

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soon gain possession & cause one to lose heart very speedily!. Do you know, my dear that the more I cast my eyes around & ponder on the many friends I have & have had, I do not see one who ever could have won the deep love I feel for you. I know not why or wherefore! The feeling I have for you is so different from what I ever felt before – from the first you inspired confidence, & respect. I felt that with you to protect me, I was safe. I had an

ideal which seemed never likely to be found or realized – I was telling Mamma so today – how much you seemed to love me & etc – all I thought of you, compared to the way I had felt & she said, “You were the right one.” If your confessions of love are sweet to me, how much more so, mine must be to you! – it is almost too much for me to own up to the love I bear you, but, darling were you nearer, your little girl would be more coy – distance makes me bolder, as you cannot see the blushes [assaulting?] my cheeks as I write. I was afraid you shrank from being called weak through love for me. That if you came before next winter people would think you less of a man, owing to your love - naturally, I felt a wee bit pained, but have not looked at that word since. As we

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both think we are company for each other I do not say we will not stay at home sometimes – but if friends drop in, they will meet with a welcome at any time; is not that true? Mrs. Hubert, my sister, said yesterday “it will be nice for you Maye – all your love making will come, after marriage”. I replied “don’t fancy that”. “You will have seen so little of him, & so long a time will have elapsed since you parted, that you will have to begin again” was her answer. What do you say to that? ask Mrs. Mac if she finds me affectionate – she always reproached me for being very undemonstrative & caring little for people, so if she says we will be [spooney], she must believe [sic] I love you very fondly. I am not as religious as Mrs. Mac by a long shot – when I pray, I try to do it well, but it ends there, except, of course, where very serious matters are concerned. a woman can easily learn if a man cares for her – there are so many nice little attentions he can pay her, which soon make the state of his heart known, if only to herself! Sometimes she is blind & onlookers see most of the game, as in my case; but now & then something opened my eyes & led me to hope, you were not playing with this poor little country lassie!!.. If the woman is not cared for, her life is dreadful – she cannot go out & enjoy herself, if she has any regard for her

good name, often the only thing left – if the man does not meet with the love he desires at home, he looks for it elsewhere – enjoys life as well as he knows how & nothing is said of him. men are ready with their sympathy & none can be found to blame – they merely pity him! – can you tell me why the weaker one has the most to perform & why so much is expected of her? is it fair to us? If my pet is not happy with his little girl, it will break my heart. I have determined to do all in my power to make your life with me a pleasant one & will not fail in my duty in any way. What more can I do, pet? Your news of Capt. Colton's doings does not surprise me & I am glad to hear he did not succeed – if perchance you got the appointment, if it advanced you in any way, I should rejoice, but darling what would I do without you for so long? I shudder to think of it only – “without you, what is life to me?”. I should die of loneliness with you away from me, as it is for you that I leave all so dear to me. I am pleased the Comr. gained his point concerning the [canteens] & as you recommended them several times, you must be so too. Tell me all you care to, I am a very

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willing listener & it flatters me to believe [sic] you think I have sufficient head to take an interest in all that concerns my own darling for I have any amount of heart where he is interested & have given ample proof of it. Though not a favorite of Mr. Campbell's, I am charmed to hear he is better & trust he will rapidly improve. Is it not singular how similar our letters both written on the 24th are? – You speak of my being a Catholic & etc & mention your dream about my kissing you. I speak of religion, trusting it will never cause one pang of regret & tell my dream also. You ask me not to get angry because you divulge your dream? is it likely I would, when I imprint those sweets on what is only your picture. What would I not give to have the real lips near? I saw a sunrise in the Rockies, but never in Macleod – why should I rise so early, without good reasons? Now that you have met your fate, the Misses Johnsons have no use for you, fearing their

charms will not overbalance mine in your eyes. Still, one evening they proved so entertaining that you had no more voice left when you came into Mrs. Mac's, & calling out a little weakened you very much; so much so that you could not answer me – do you remember? Mr. Likely went away at the end of Oct, I

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recollect quite well, as he regretted being unable to devote his time to me, if I could be prevailed upon to leave, owing to the prisoner he had to escort to Regina. I might have joined them & have been quite an acquisition to the band. You keep puzzling me as to the time you will get your leave. You mention it now as next summer – it will soon be the spring, at the rate you go. I do not know whether I will allow you to come or not. I will decide & let you know in due time, only give me notice when you leave Macleod, else you might find me absent. You are bold to insinuate that you will not wait for permission to call upon me, & perhaps I will not be at home to you if you do not humbly apologize. Your pet is smart enough to be able to see when a thing pleases you or not, & will be even better initiated after we have been some time together; consequently will do all possible to please you, without compelling you to pretend what you do not really feel. Do not imagine me a treasure – I am not a bad specimen of the sex, but do not possess all the qualities attributed to me, by overzealous friends & fear my darling will be bitterly disappointed in his little girl. Let us

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settle the question by thinking we both are very lucky. I know I am & do not hesitate in saying so. I received another letter of congratulation yesterday – “Major Steele is considered very lucky by all my Cornwall friends & if he is my ideal, must be worthy of all my love”. An old gentleman, who looks upon me as a particular pet – sends me word, “he has prepared pistol & sword, &

if Major Steele is not the finest fellow in the Country, he had better keep clear of Cornwall!" – does it not frighten you? Well, darling if you lacked love before, you have a superabundance of it now & will ever, as long as my heart throbs. Do you allude to Mr. Wroughton when you say "my poor friend got into a little scrape the other day?" – if so, I regret it deeply – I cannot say why, but it takes away a certain amount of the nice feelings you have for a person when you hear he has indulged in too much liquor. You know how it affects me, as I told you before, especially once when out riding & I never could live with a man who took it in any quantity. I should be in constant terror & cannot account for the antipathy I have for it. Of course, I understand it is necessary sometimes, but those occasions are sufficient.

My sisters, father & uncle have gone to spend the evenings at Uncle Henry Harwood's – they are having the young folks of the place there for a quite quiet time, previous to doing penance for six long weeks. I preferred writing to my pet, so remained at home. Beau, (my brother Auguste's pet name) returned to college yesterday – his short visit benefited him in every way & as this is his last year, will study well – his college career has been a very nice one, as he always came out first & has won ever so many medals & handsome books. Well, my pet, it is soon time for me to close my eyes, as the hour for the beauty sleep ceases at midnight & I am sadly in need of a little, if I wish to retain what little I had in that line for some time longer, so as it is for your sake I desire to keep the good looks, you will not blame me, if I say good night. pleasant dreams for my darling, I trust & many sweet kisses also from the one who loves to be called your very own. March 6th. I have just come in from church & found no letter waiting for me from my heart's treasure. It has suddenly dawned upon me that "my poor friend" is Woolly L___. I could not imagine who you meant & was surprised I could believe [sic] Mr. W__ could be guilty of such a thing. I regret it exceed-

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exceedingly, but am not surprised, as had Woolly not liked it, he would not be where he is now. I trust it will not happen [him] again, as he is old enough & should possess sufficient strength of character to resist temptation. I hope Mrs. Mac received my last written on the 21st of Feb & given you the short note enclosed. You will say your little girl wants too much done, but my pet, it is for your comfort, as well as mine. You long for the warm summer my own darling, so that you can go about in order that time may pass. how I would love to see you if only for a moment! – but no! That would not satisfy my love. I should not wish to part again, so it is well that you do not come too soon – is not this pretty,

“The dawn
Of an imperishable love passed through
The lattice of my senses, and I, too,
Did offer incense in that solemn place –
A woman’s heart, made pure and
Sanctified by grace.”

That was the case with me, with the words changed somewhat, but the idea is the same

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& the love unchangeable, my own darling one. Evidently the trains are delayed somewhere, but not owing to snow, as we have had no fall of “the beautiful” for some time & mild weather. Surely tomorrow will bring me news from my pet, who is so dear to me. I hope you are feeling quite well & that your health will improve, as you have been ailing more or less since that first fatal ride all through my fault. Well, my darling, I will leave you, but cannot kiss good night, as you are too far away - later, we may do so as

“We never say “Good –night,”
For our eager lips are fleeter

Than the tongue; and a kiss is sweeter
Than parting words,
That cut like swords;
So we always kiss Good-night”.

but though it is daylight, I kiss good bye just the same. Trusting to hear
from my own old darling love, that being in the home which

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is to shelter us both causes him to indulge in sweet day dreams, with a
prominent part allotted [sic] to me, beleive [sic] me, with fondest love, ever

Your own affectionate

little Girl.

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