

2008.1.1.1.1.15

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Vaudreuil  
Feb 12<sup>th</sup> / 89.

My darling Sam,

This evening having some leisure at my disposal, & your nice letter dated the 2<sup>nd</sup> having come to me, I think I cannot pass the moments more pleasantly than by conversing with my darling so far away. You know when with you I used to say that "Absence & etc." was usually the case. You were very incredulous & generally smiled in a knowing way. Well, dear, will you believe if your little girl affirms that the old adage is very, very true, as she is learning every day? Does your heart beat a little faster as she blushing makes her confession? Mine does dear & every time one of your nice letters comes to brighten up one of the days, which although busily employed with home duties sometimes will seem unending, I verily know to my cost that my love grows deeper. You are proving that I was unjust to my pet, when I hinted at neglect & make me feel so mean, dear

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when you allude to it. however, it is merely what I deserve. It is well I was not in Macleod when you went riding else I might have been tempted to risk being blown away, to have the extreme pleasure of being picked up by my darling's strong right arm & carried.. Where? You flatter me very much dear, by what you say of Mr. Steele – there must be something about me that particularly fascinates Northwest people, for no one here ever thought as much of me as some of those I was fortunate enough to meet during my

happy visit, which has so changed the current of my life! I only met two Steele's & the one is so fond of the other, that the former was prepared to like me, because the latter did. is not that very true? There must be a weak corner somewhere of which I possess the key & that perhaps may account for the mesmeric influence I have on the family. Antoine is busy trying to copy a map, shakes the table at a great rate & his tongue going at a [2.40?] rate – so if there are some mistakes in this do not be surprised & pass them over, as well as the

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repetitions [sic] of which there will be many. The little I knew of Julia, I was charmed with – & I greatly regret not having the pleasure of renewing acquaintance. I trust to meet her “some day” & live on hopes of persuading her to favor me with a visit in the near future. Well, my pet, if my good opinion is all you can care for, you have it & that of those who surround me as well. You are so nice, good & kind, that were you not a fine looking man, as you are perfectly well aware of, you would seem lovely in their eyes as well as mine for the very depth of the love you bear me. My confessions of love must be getting stale for I never write you dearest, without letting my feelings ooze gently from the tip of my pen sometime or other, to your delight I suppose, as the knowledge of taming such a wild heart, is not without affording some pleasures to the keeper & charmer who possesses such unlimited power. I never expect to change, my pet, so surely where so much love lurks, there must be happiness. So Mrs. K. was at her old trick of tearing people to pieces – fortunately, you were there, else I should have been hauled over the coals as well – for she does not like “this son of a gun” as she very politely spoke of me ~~on~~ one day. You still cling to your idea that Mr. Barnes cared for me. I feel sure you are mistaken & that your imagination plays you false for once. As for the Dr., he is rather good-looking, but, he has unfortunately given me causes to think him anything but what he aims to be – a gentleman! I have heard Mrs. Mac

rave over Mrs. K. beautiful mouth, but, I never considered her pretty in any way. She is tall, but, had not a nice figure I found; but tastes differ so! I did not know of Mr. Campbell's illness & was sorry to hear he is so ill. I trust his friends are needlessly alarmed & that he will soon recover his health. Never having had an opportunity of judging of his amiability or power of pleasing, I know not how much he would be missed in Macleod society. be the Good Samaritan, dear; charity is always rewarded & I know it would be a comfort to me, were I ill, to see my pet every day. Poor Mr. Starnes! his pride must have been fearfully ruffled at the notion of the men daring to [kiss] him! I fancy I hear him, for he told me he could swear & so far forgot himself, as to use some ugly short words in my presence once or twice. I was going to give him a

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lesson if he had attempted to do so any more & he should never have failed to remember my words. It will be nice to have Mrs. Mac so near, but were it not that somebody dearer than all were is concerned, I should never have consented to live so far away from persons who have until now, been all the world to me. "The power of Love" you see well illustrated. I have written Grandmamma but once since my return – Mamma likes writing & news is too scarce to enable me to make two letters interesting. I propose favoring her soon now, as but for her we might never have met. She thought me very hard to please & feared I should never come across my ideal of a man. She knows at present that I have seen the one necessary for my future happiness, & seems glad my choice has fallen on one in every way so worthy of honest affection. You say in your last alluding to your coming "I would not get much leave. I would be called \_\_\_\_\_" here follows a word I cannot make out & would very much like you to recall it to mind & write it again – it looks like "weak" but surely I must be mistaken!

Your

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birthday gift I wrote you of thanking you for your beautiful present. I am a May-flower, my pet & trust you find me too warm to have come “in the [caved] [blast]” – cannot you see the amount of green about me which will fully convince you that I belong to Spring? I cannot imagine what change I have wrought in you, my pet. Your love for me was new, never having felt affection for me before, but that [illegible] it, does it not? You were disappointed at receiving one letter, but I write faithfully twice a week. There being so little news, my letters are not interesting, & two are quite sufficient to wade through, besides all your other mail matter. I also plead guilty to feeling very blue when yours fail me & I am surrounded by people whom I love. What must you feel, if you truly derive as much pleasure from mine, as I from yours? Sometimes the pony may have felt like his rider, rather shy when the professor came too near: but the feeling wore off by degrees, as any one who witnessed our last ride, would be very apt to affirm; do you remember it? had not your little darling some of the agility which seems to belong particularly to country girls, she might

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have been hurt the day she fell. What is the matter with your men just now, that they desert in that way? I trust you will lose nothing by the last escapade of your Sergt. Major, as I should deeply deplore it. You will commence to fancy it is a case of, “What’s yours is mine, what’s mine is my own”. I am sorry you are kept so very busy, as it gives you so little leisure – in another way, it is a good thing as you have not time to miss your little girl too much. I am pleased you were not so occupied when I was up, as the days that are past would never have been & they are a very bright spot in my life: letters are nice, but [reserves] far nicer when they can take the place of the long [budgets] I have to inflict you with. Tulips & flowers thrive

well in warm weather & everything seems sweeter far, when the music of the voice blends with the low whispers, & gives more power to the words which are uttered. I shall never forget the night you remained too late. Why you shall know later. You seem anxious to know the secret, so I suppose it is best to tell you, though I did want to surprise you. I am making a pretty scarlet jacket, which is very becoming & you must admire when you have the privilege [sic] of seeing it. As Dr. Allan would put it "I have the scarlet fever just now" so fancy that may affect a cure. Well, my darling, it is time for me to retire. The drooping lids are sufficient warning for "the sweetest girl on earth". God is good to have blessed me with so much love & to have given me heart enough to return it. Good night, my pet. Many sweet kisses (later you will know I can give them) I send you. God bless my own darling – pleasant dreams!!....

Wednesday. I will add a little more to this which I commenced last night & acknowledge the receipt of my pet's letter dated the 5<sup>th</sup>. You begin to think "I have a little corner in my heart for you". Why, my darling, my love for you sometimes makes me feel sad, as you are so far, I have not seen the pleasure of gazing (unknown to you) on your dear face. All I have are your portraits & many & many a kiss they get on the sly. I am glad they cannot speak for many sweet words would be known which will be secret for-ever, as it is. Who told Mr. Peters about me? Call Mrs. Mac to order please, when she begins to chafe you about me. I am sure you will be good & kind to me & my faith is in a good man. Of course, none of my own thought you a "myth" but others did – you are big compared to me

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my darling, but that may be the reason that the love I have is so great in proportion to the size of the object loved, so it is not so very much to be regretted is it, pet? You news about the report spread by that little wretch D\_\_\_ does not surprise me – he it was who sent the news down here that Lex had lost Lethbridge owing to some mismanagement of his post & I do

not know what all he said. I am sorry you were not at the banquet for Lex's sake & trust truth will prevail. Capt. Neale must be very low & mean, but I am not astonished. Mrs. Mac would fret about it if she knew it. We are different in that way. I would tear a man's eyes out who reported false stories about you. I trust Mrs. Mac will have more pleasure with the new girl, as she says the other had a fearful temper. Never mind, pet, had we not had some few ~~sp~~ altercations we should never have found out what good stuff we are made of. My goodness, it would take me a year to give all the kisses in arrears by the time you come. Of course, you will have the privilege [sic] of taking some, but not too many. Did the Neales sell their furniture as they intended? Mrs. N. must be better by now if not well. To hear the way T\_\_ D\_\_ writes to his brother, he is the biggest swell in the West – it makes me

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furious sometimes & I have to bite my tongue to refrain from saying something hateful. You are good-looking to me, my own one & though I am far from pretty, you think I am, so we can cry quits. I hope you will cease fretting about me or you will wear away to a shadow, then what would I do? I wish I could see you in your new quarters my darling. You will be very fine & alone I suppose. I am happy to learn Mr. Champneys has not forgotten me – his heart has been damaged so often, that it is frail & susceptible now. I trust you will not give the same impression of married life, when as old a Benedict, as Capt. [Gagnon]. I would deeply regret it. So you did not stand by Mr. Pritchard during the trying ordeal. Who did? I wish you could persuade her to Mrs. Mac to ride. having no lady with her, she is apt to care less for going out. I am that way too & when you want me to take a breath of fresh air, will have to keep me company. So Mrs. Mac showed you the nice things I said. She is very indiscreet, but I hope you will forget them. We are having another spell of bad weather. I wish I was in the heat sometimes my pet, but it will come in the long run. Good bye my treasure.

Thank you for your nice letters, my own darling. how I do love you! The very thought of you makes my heart throb more quickly & every beat is true

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to you & will be forever. God bless you dear & increase the love you bear.

Your own little

Girl

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