

2008.1.1.1.1.10

Marie Harwood to Sam Steele

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Did you remark the seal I use? Very appropriate, is it not? –

Vaudreuil  
Jan 27<sup>th</sup> / 89.

My own darling Sam,

The first very pleasant task for me today is to try & express my sincere thanks for the beautiful bracelet you sent me as a N. Years gift. I am quite at a loss for words & were you only near would whisper my heartfelt gratitude into your ear & seal it with the sweetest kiss I could possibly give. however, knowing my good heart & the deep love I have for you, I trust you will accept & know how heartily I thank you, even if my pen is deficient in expressions suitable for the occasions. Judging from the writing on the box which I suppose is Mr. Elmes Steele's, & the letter being mailed in Winnipeg on the 21<sup>st</sup> I believe you have not seen it – it is lovely & so much admired by all being very chaste & solid looking – a diamond in the centre of a spray of leaves, & two pink corals, one on each side. it is far too lovely for me,

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& convinces me more than ever, of how terribly you are going to spoil me. My ring & watch are also very much admired & Mamma thinks I have been more than fortunate in having won your love. Your great kindness & generosity in a great measure consoles her when she thinks of the parting & the long distance which will separate us. It is so funny! I had the intention of having the very stone that was lost taken out some day & a red one put

in thinking that it would look better so & Mr. Steele put my idea into execution without knowing it!! You are very well aware of the fact that I should be delighted to teach you waltzing myself: only I thought it would be too bad to deprive yourself of the pleasure of a few turns, when you could get such a charming professor of the Terpsichorean art as the Majah! at hand & ready to teach you all she knew! Ungrateful man! to deprive one of such a pleasure!!!... I asked Mr. Steele if Julia was to be married & he said no. I am so sorry I did not know it sooner! Your letter of the 18<sup>th</sup> I received yesterday & if it could only speak

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why! I would send it right back, in order that it could tell you of the very warm welcome it met with & how often it was read. it is kind of you to answer me so soon, as you must be very busy. But my darling knows full well how I look forward to his letters. You say "it is nice of me to write so often & nicely." Why my pet, I do not know what I should do were the pleasure of writing deprived me. I should go right back to you, my own one & inflict you with my company "for better, for worse." So you see what a lot of trouble these long epistles save you! Mr. Steele is certainly very lenient to me, & in praising me to such an extent, knew he was pleasing you, but I will try & persuade myself that he was an uninterested party & means all he told you. The last attribute, lady like, is the one I can lay claim too [sic] with pride, for "I am a penniless lass with a long pedigree "in good earnest & I trust you will never have occasion to find me otherwise. If "Sam is not a happy man" it will certainly not be my fault, for I am willing to make any sacrifice & do all in my power to make his life one "long, happy day." I really cannot imagine why they all praise me now – as you found something lovable in me, they have come to the conclusion that I must be nice, having won your love & esteem – that is the only way I can account for the kind way manner in which they mention me. You missed an hour's rest to write me! it is good of you, but if I told you of how often I lie awake thinking of all

the conversations, rides & occasions when we were together, you would perhaps be very much surprised. You cannot imagine how pained I was to hear of Mr. Huot's removal. knowing how much you think of him, & how confidentially you talk to him, makes me feel all the more for you – then the one who replaces him! From the words you use in reference to him, I am sure you hate him with all your heart & I do not wonder when one has a warm friend, anything done to him is done to you & you are more willing to do battle in ~~their~~ his cause, than for yourself. he must have been very wicked to make a man die of a broken heart – one reads of such things, but is incredulous until they come home to you; then, you beleive! [sic] it will be very disagreeable to have a man such as he, under your command! Lex speaks of coming to help Grandmamma! surely she has

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enough sons down here to assist her in everyway! however, say nothing of this, as it might cause trouble. Well, my pet, I did think you rude now & then, especially when you hurt me & cut me – my pride is my most sensitive point & that was what you generally managed to assail! however, sometimes I used to say “he dislikes me & cuts me so much that I think him rude” when I was only very much hurt, & found “my heart leading my head” instead of its being just the other way, as I had always schooled my heart pretty well. It is over now & you never will hurt me any more. Your love will check your tongue & turn the bitter words to sweet, for my sake, my pet, will it not? Knowing that you are sure not to come till midsummer I will not tire myself, but go out when I feel like it. There is very little inducement to bring me out here. It is not as it used to be. My heart is so far away that the ones whom I cared for in days gone by have no attraction for me now – such is life! Yes, my pet, I never can have too much love & thank God, for blessing me as He has done, every day! Your love brings me happiness & so much of it, that I fear

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sometimes to find it “but a dream” – however, your dear words are before my eyes, & lead me to believe [sic] it is all true & that your deep love ardent love will I trust be mine “until death us do part”. I am a true woman, with all her failings & virtues, which tend perhaps to render us only the more lovable as we excite & seek man’s pity & care by our very weakness. You will, I fear, find one letter of mine a contradiction of the other – in one I tell you, you must wait two years & the other is indiscreet enough to let you know how I long to see you! – perhaps it’s a case of longing on both sides, my pet! You know by now, that I really never meant it, when I teased you by saying two years. it was merely for fun & you were cognizant of the fact, though you would not let on, were you not? If you came & anything happened you in your position or post, I should reproach myself to my dying day: so, even if perchance, my love causes me to tell you how much a sight of your dear face would please me, pass it over in silence & be happy in the knowledge of the deep affection you have won. I sometimes think it would be better not to take too long a lease when you do come, in case of

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anything going wrong in your absence & you know my pet I am a reasonable woman. I am sure the Majah! was very sincere when she expressed the hope that I should come up soon! What hypocrites women can be. When I know how little she cares for me, particularly! You have not yet sent the photo’s taken in Lethbridge have you? The other day, that is Friday, I went to spend the afternoon & take dinner with my Aunt, Mrs. Harwood. I brought your photos with me, as she & Uncle were very anxious to see what kind of a fellow had pleased fastidious Maye. You would actually have blushed to hear the nice things said of you. The Col. thinks

you a splendid fellow! “just look at that figure!” – “Col. Hughes praised him up to me & I know all about him” – you are a perfect hero, my pet, according to him, & of course, being a military man, take his eye as he is rather fond & partial to the members of his old profession. You have, I am sure, a warm admirer, & Auntie also is very anxious to see you – you will be well received by one & all when you come to see your little girl, be sure of that. When I was talking of you, saying how good & kind you are & etc, Auntie said “Well, Maye we all say that is what you deserve. The man does not exist, who is too good for you & you merit all your good fortune & happiness”, so I too come in for my share of praise, from those who know me best – they think you will be a happy man with me, & I trust will not be deceived. You have won all the mature love of a mature woman, who has given you all her heart, & it is a pretty large one, having escaped unscathed through many a trying fire & occasion: but, you will get tired hearing me tell you of my love, so I had better change & say less about it. It is very cold today & a great snow-storm is raging. My Sister, Mrs. Hubert goes to town tomorrow for a month, with her baby. We will miss them very much, as my brother-in-law generally brings us all the news. My sister, Louise spent a few days in the city, having her teeth attended to. She returned last evening accompanied by Mr. Drayner. By the by I must tell you something – he has already sent to England for a wedding present for me, though I am not supposed to know it, Louise having been forbidden to tell me – it is a gold-handled riding whip with my name engraved thereon. Be sure & say nothing of it to Mrs. Mac

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or anyone else, as I should not like it known that I had told you – it is kind of him, is it not? besides, very few would think of giving me such a thing. strange though, how very little sympathy there is between us! You would perhaps be surprised when I say that I have never enjoyed five minutes conversation with him. I cannot say why or wherefore, except that I do not

like him & feel as if I never will. Louise is very fortunate in being able to see him so often, far more so than I am, still, I would not give my own love far away, for anyone I know near!. Mr. D\_\_ in my opinion is a perfect cynic & exceedingly selfish – always thinks he knows everything better than anyone else, & has the happy knack of saying disagreeable things, whenever he has the chance – not a charming picture to contemplate! he plays the piano beautifully. That is his one redeeming point. I only hope Louise will be as happy as I, but with such a difference in the two men, whom we are destined to make happy or miserable, I fear she will rue the day she becomes a wife, while I shall always look back to the day with the greatest pleasure: at least, so my heart tells me & I know you will

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not deceive me intentionally!. I speak my mind to you darling, & say things I should not allow others to hear. My brother, Regie, returned to college on Thursday, perfectly free from cough or cold. I hope he will keep well until the end of the year, as he cannot afford to lose his time. he has grown very much & that makes him rather delicate. You would have laughed ! do you know that not having my ring led some persons to imagine that you were but a creature of my very vivid imagination – a myth, in fact. however the coming of your photo surely will convince them of the contrary. I did not tell you that I almost had a proposal on the train from a merchant who lives in Rat Portage. I only saw him for two hours, but evidently made a deep impression. I laughed myself sick & you will enjoy it when I tell you of it de vive viox. it would be too long to enter into details now, but, when he heard I had been five months in Macleod & was returning home, he said “ Well! if the fellows in M\_\_ let a young lady like you go home without asking you to return, they ain't worth anything like the fellows in Rat Portage! Why! You wouldn't be there a week, without having all the men at your feet” – he asked me I could not invent an excuse to get there, told me

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he intended coming to the Carnival & wound up with “of all the young ladies I ever met in my life, you are the nicest & I’m a widower myself & thirty five. I enjoyed talking with you, as you are such a nice, sensible young lady & no airs about you either, & have the most charming French way about you, which is so taking & that always fetches all the fellows in Rat Portage”. I never thought mentioning it, as I always had so much else to say. I brought it to mind the other evening & told my Aunt about it & she thoroughly enjoyed my description. Mr. Huot has gone by now, of course, as they have to leave on short notice. You will write him, I suppose – be sure & recall me to his memory when you do so!. His leaving you will surely not interfere with all your plans concerning your projected trip next autumn, will it? I should be very sorry if it did. Do you ever see “Woolsy” [Larylands]? I hope he is behaving well, as I take an interest in him, you know. his name is Thompson L\_\_ but “Woolsy” is a pet name, given him by his confreres when he was in the bank in Montreal, owing to his crisp, curly hair. Has Dr. Powell returned? I regretted he lost his patient, Mrs. Jackson – poor little

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woman. She was young to die & her husband must have felt her death keenly, particularly, as he too was so ill at the time!. I heard by hook or by crook, that you were ~~going~~ seen in Macleod & “that you looked as if you had lost all your friends & had nothing more to live for.” They will begin to think you have found out that you had made a mistake & are already grieving over the step you ~~comitt~~ committed the folly of taking – however, I trust all will go smooth & even when crowned “ by a woman’s wonderful love.” Well! my own, own darling, I fear this is a very uninteresting letter & I hope you will be lenient. There is so little going on, that it is difficult to find subjects worthy of mention & your deep love will I know make allowances

for this dry letter. Your's [sic] always are so nice that I regret my inability to make mine worthy of the one to whom they are written. One thing you are sure of, that no matter how poor the letters are, the heart of the writer is rich in love & it is all yours. Once more I send you on Cupid's wings a thousand or more of the kisses you say are sweet. God bless my own love! Wishing you a fond good-night, & very

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pleasant dreams in which I desire to be the most important personage believe [sic] me, my own darling Sam,

Ever,

Your own

Maye.

Pray excuse all mistakes. People come talking to me one after the other & it puts me out by making me repeat, put down wrong words, or something of that sort.

God keep you, my pet & love,

Your own little

Girl

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