

Tebel-Vos

14. 10. 34.

Douglas, dear

No, it wasn't boredom, it was - is - I'll try to explain. (Who also said I'd not written? You ^{were} ~~were~~ the worst, by far, bit of bad conscience on my list.)

It was like this. Your letter came in the whirling middle of the holidays, half our friends camped about Sennen, in tents, in ~~the~~ pubs, on boats -- not to speak of the house overflowing. We turned the porch into a cocktail-bar and restaurant, and I was a mixed mother and hotel-keeper for two months on end.

Your letter read aloud one breakfast with shouts of joy. While I somehow ~~had~~ had it in my head that you might be still turning up here; and before we knew where we were, we should be seeing you and telling you about everything. Meanwhile, the storm of friends went on, and, as they began to fade out, maternal problems became rather urgent; ~~Camilla's 'premiere communion'~~ Camilla's 'premiere communion' and a good deal of the stress of adolescence. You know.

Then, just as I was about to settle down and write to everyone, after such a Summer - (Sennen for Excitement) should be its slogan) - Gaby had his accident. We'd had new steps put in down the path to the house, and had both decided that the third wasn't safe; and had omitted to get it altered, saying: 'After the holidays', and we'd just given the order when, one afternoon,

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we'd been having tea with a nice woman and came away in fits of giggles. I was behind him, and on the fatal step. he turned round to laugh, ^{again} missed it and went headlong to the bottom, broke his arm on a stone; and it will be six weeks to a day when he comes out of Penzance Hospital on Thursday next. As his doctor said -- never, not even in the War, had he met such a smash. In an appalling place. It would not set, not until I got the wind up and insisted on a consultation, and the new man altered the treatment and it began to stick. Up to then (tho' he doesn't know,) there was a sporting chance that he'd loose at least the partial use of it for good.

So you see, I, crammed up with work that had to be done, have spent dis-organised days between here and Penzance, and my letters were the job that got most neglected. These affairs wear the survivors, you know. For weeks he was in dreadful pain, under morphia, his arm out in a pulley with a twenty pound ~~weight~~ weight on the end of it; a wire through the flesh of his arm, which suppurated. No sleep. Unable ever to turn over or sit up, Now he's beginning to potter. And the steps are all that steps should be....

What a tale about your son, what a glorious tale. Endlessly I remember it and laugh. As you say, he would be lunching with Ted Haynes. Please let us hear some more of his adventures. What a novel it would make; and what is going to happen? Douglas, what have you hatched? ? ?

My own lass is turning out very well. If she develops from her present phase, we'll be proud of her. Easy to look at and a fine mind. Very serious -- means to be a doctor, and she'll be one. I can just see her at it, she's the scientific spirit; and there go my dreams of (I) the first woman Regius Professor. (II) the

gayest and wittiest of salonnières. (My own too utterly submerged ambitions, I wondered if I might see fulfilled in her. I shan't.)

Admired very much your review of 'This must be the Place'. (And for god's sake don't read the tosh I wrote in the same number. I was waiting to ring Gaby's consultant up and hear if they'd save his arm or not.) But you hit it. Did we appear? ~~I~~ must get it if only for the Pat and Duff bit.

Meanwhile I want to see your son, would give a lot to keep an eye on his development. Its an adventure happening. And how is the other, with his charm and his irresistable laugh? He'll do well. Both parents most pleasing points.

If you've time, write again; and, if possible, a line to Gaby. He's not through yet and he's depressed, and your friendship means a really great deal to him. Address till Thursday:

The West Cornwall Hospital

Penzance.

Best love to Malin. All you want for yourself.

Always

