

Sennen.

Cornwall.

5. II. 36.

My Dear Camilla

This is a very important letter, written to you now partly because you are getting really older. So, my dear, attend to it carefully: --

First of all, Mrs Parsons. All letters safely on the fire. Both lawyers, as if correct in these cases, met and solemnly burned both sealed packets! At Mr Swan's, in the XVIII Century room in London, I know so well, where so much of our fortune has been decided, so many family secrets told and locked away.

Now, that's well over. At the cost of quite a lot of money. Lawyers don't work for nothing. And a lot of heat and bother, trouble and pains.

Now, before we close the subject, reflect, my dear, a little. The good thing that has come out of it surely is that we have become better friends; that you've gained trust in me, begun to see me for what I am and what I've always been -- The person who cares for you, and always has, more than anyone else on this earth; who is always there to love and try to understand and help.

Yet, you know well that, in these years past, you've gone round the world in general and Sennen in particular, explaining how little you cared what Mother thought; how you did what you liked;

giving largely imagined and most indiscreet versions of our family affairs. Not realising, though your real friends were very loyal to you, how you shocked Sennen! *Don't suppose all the time. I didn't know, I wasn't hurt. But know better but you are a good sense could tell ya.*

Then you fell in with people like the Parsons and this humiliating wretchedness happened. Because to a vulgar jealous little woman like that you were fair game, easy stuff, even a kind of cat's paw.

You see, what she said (and there are plenty of people like her about) to herself was something like this: "Camilla has no loyalty, no family pride, no discretion -- Thinks nothing of her Mother. I daresay her Mother thinks precious little of her by now. I shouldn't, if one of my children behaved like that...." Otherwise she would never have dared treat you or allow you to be treated like that. She has had one of the surprises of her life. It began when I had her in here, and gone on ever since. I could see her eyes popping out when she found a mother, armed at all points, charging down like a tigress to her Child's defence. Then, lawyers, guardians, all the entourage of gentle and precious girlhood brought into play. And no sentimentalities <sup>about it</sup> either.

XX

Now, about these next holidays. ATTEND AGAIN, for this explanation is most important and goes deeper than any I have given you yet. Only since we've begun to understand one another better, I can speak more plainly. More so than I have ever done before.

I don't want you to go to your Father yet. For the present I must say 'No', and for the following reasons. (I am horribly sorry

about them, but they're not of my making; and my first care <sup>3.</sup> ~~be~~ <sup>must be</sup> for you.

Your Father has married again, a handsome, clever woman; ~~and~~ that is the utmost, best people say about her; and you may be sure I have tried to find out. But so far as I can find out, not the woman to be a kind of semi-stepmother to you at present, or <sup>whom</sup> you would like. Again, Joan will probably be there; she is jealous of you, very naturally, and is in with a very bad set. I mean people ~~be~~ it would prejudice you in the future if you started your life in a position to be 'tutoyed' by them.

When you are older, bien; and when you are of age, I shall have nothing more to say. Then you can do as you like. But, my dear, at the distinguished houses where you, as my daughter and my Father's Grandchild will be welcome -- its a beastly thing to say -- as and thought of as intimate with her, Joan's half sister/you would ~~be~~ not be.

That's the miserable truth. I want you launched fair. Once that is well done, you can do as you like, <sup>with my clearest blessing.</sup>

One pleasant thing, my lawyers think they may be able to arrange for me to send you to Oxford or Cambridge when you are eighteen. That will give a person of your <sup>intelligence</sup> ~~age~~ the best start possible; there you will meet half ~~that~~ the young things worth meeting in all England. Its not certain, but looks hopeful.

Last of all, my dear, I want you for myself these holidays; so does all Sennen; so does John Crofts. You're my girl; I love you. WE're learning to know one another better. That is the thing, above all just now. You've all your grown-up life to be in London if you like; play round with all the latest ideas, persons etc. Just as I have done. But what we have and can <sup>have between us</sup> ~~have~~ cuts even deeper than <sup>these</sup> ~~that~~.

Have patience a little, and you shall miss nothing. Only trust me, that, in order truly to have it, you must ~~learn~~ to do. Who am doing my very utmost to get you that full, rich, adventurous life you want; that no one wants you to have as I ~~do~~; that certainly no one can do so much <sup>for you</sup> to obtain.

It may be a hard thing to ask you to take on trust, but when you are older I don't think that you will be disappointed.

ever ever an

John

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One last hard thing -- Remember that people are jealous of your Mother.

About Grandmother I will write later.