

See Hollis. Aug. 6th / 85.

My dear Mother,

As Ilian and Noel are both sitting, you will not recieve a long letter from me. And indeed I have nothing to tell you from us. Almost entirely shut up to the house. On Saturday night Maume had an alarming attack of unconsciousness with disturbance of breathing and Dr. Hargreaves to see her after midnight. She was better next morning, and is now about as usual again, but of course we have to be always prepared for these changes. You need not have written to me so sharply about the price. Well I said was that I could not be certain of the description you had given, and that therefore I did not like to send the order for fear of mistake. However upon receiving your presumptory instructions last Tuesday, I wrote to a London optician recommended to me by Mary Johnson, and told him if the thing could be supplied for 15/6 to send you a pair, and send the bill to me. I put out your line of description and enclosed it, so if there is any mistake, you need not visit it upon me. Ilian is home again and very glad I am to have her. With respect to the letter from Lambert

Aletta, which was to be sent to you and which you have not received, I can only tell you what Filian told me, first by letter at the time and then in a conversation which I had with her yesterday. I asked her why, if her Aunt Aletta said the letter had better be sent to you, she did not send it to me to enclose with her son. She replied that she thought I should not like to see it. I asked why should anything be written to her, or young girl, away from her mother's care, which was to be left from that mother and sent to the father. It was the letter written to her by Aletta upon the receipt of mine, protesting against her assumption of an authority superior to mine. When I found, from your letter, that the letter had not been sent to you, though it had been at Aletta's direction, returned to her by Filian, I asked Filian to tell me, as clearly as she could remember, its contents. They were as follows.

Aletta said she understood, from a communication she had received from me that I objected to her seeing Filian again, on account of her speaking English. (This was not true) that she had intended to take her to various places of interest, but that must now be given up; that she was writing to you on the

subject, in order that you might not be angry with Filian, and that Filian would return the letter, for Aletta to enclose in hers to you, that you might know what she had said. Finally, Filian ~~does~~ never to forget that her Aunt Aletta was the dearest friend of her own mother. There is something exceedingly subtle in all this. A band is formed, consisting of yourself, Filian, Filian's "son" mother, and Aletta, and outside of this Filian's present mother, from whom all necessary sacrifice and self-denial are expected, is to stand. She is to know nothing about the letter. She is to be as one against four, thrust out into the cold, whilst the child, the father, the aunt and the "son" mother are formed into a coalition against her. But this is not all. In a letter to Filian a fortnight ago, Aletta says she has had a "dear letter of love" from you, in reply to the one from her telling you of her night with Filian in Paris, thus tacitly implying to Filian that you fully agree with the line she took on that occasion. and thus a second time I am thrust out, whilst you and your sister and

Lilian are banded together. You
may set this right for yourself with
Althea but I can tell you that you
will not find her the only one with
whom "much loving care and con-
cern" - to use your own words - will
be needed, before matters are made
smooth again. I, too, am capable
of being hurt and wounded, though
you seem to think that heartache
is confined to your sister, to whom
accordingly, dear letters of love must
be sent, whilst I am chidden.

Between Lilian and myself there is
perfect love and trust. She is
nearer to me than ever she was
before, in spite of those alien in-
fluences which have been brought
to bear upon her. It remains with
you to decide now, whether there is
flattery or there is no deny themselves
for me, one to be trusted. I shall
not fight against your decision
whatever it may be, but my place
shall be that of a mother or a
stranger, to all the children.

Your loving Ep