



April 15

Hi there!

You'll never believe what's happened! I'm living in a castle in Cornwall, engaged to marry a British Lord! Now I'll be able to sit around in drawing rooms making polite conversation and sipping tea. What a life!

I guess you're wondering why I'm not back at Kent State. After finishing my semester here, I couldn't bear to come right home. So I figured I'd take a few months off and get some sort of job to see me through. I found an ad for a secretary to a Lord Jack Tresyllian at his castle in Cornwall, and now here I am.

Lord Jack wasn't at all what I'd expected. He's a young, down-to-earth guy, and not bad looking either. I was a goner from the start. 😊 Luckily he felt the same way, or I might be flinging myself off the cliff!! We're announcing our engagement at a party on May 3 for all the local blue bloods. I wish you could be there to help me remember which fork to use!

Seriously, some of these upper crust types will never speak to you again if you wear the wrong outfit to dinner. I'm really glad Jack has a sense of humor about it. He helped me to keep mine!

There is one bohemian in the crowd. Her name is Vivien Pentreath, and she's a painter and sculptor who lives nearby. She's one of those women who looks just as beautiful at 50 as she did at 25. According to Jack, she was the mistress of his Uncle Lionel, the previous Lord Tresyllian. Vivien's family has lived in Cornwall for ages and she can tell lots of wonderful old stories.

One person I could do without is Iris Vane (she's really called the Honorable Iris Vane, but you won't catch ME calling her that). She's a Mayfair debutante who came on as an instant friend of mine.
(OVER →)

But there's something bitchy about her, and I think she's secretly in love with Jack. I guess castles breed romantic tangled. ♡♡♡

Jack's best friend is Ian Fordyce. Ian's an officer in the Coldstream Guards and a real lady's man. According to Clive, Ian was madly in love with Deirdre Hallam, Jack's old girlfriend. Deirdre was never able to resist flirting with another man. But her involvement with Ian was the last straw for Jack, and they broke up.

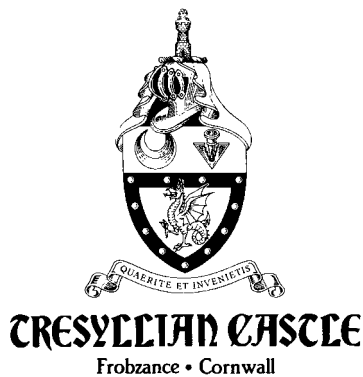
Although this didn't seem to hurt Jack and Ian's friendship, something terrible happened to Deirdre. She was really upset by the breakup and ended up drowning in a well right here at the castle. Her body was never found. The water in the well is very salty, so they think it's been polluted by an underground tidal current and that she was washed out to sea.

Deirdre's death is really fueling the imaginations of some of the castle servants. Supposedly this place is haunted by an ancient ghost called the White Lady. Now they're saying that the White Lady has been seen in the newer Residential Wing of the castle (like any good ghost she used to stick to the old section) and that she looks just like Deirdre. WHOO-EE-OOO!!!

I think Deirdre's family has fallen under the spell of some old Cornish curse. Her grandfather, Mr Poldark, also died recently under unusual circumstances. He became ill and went to a London doctor who specializes in strange drugs extracted from plants. As you might guess, the cure didn't work. The doctor, whose name is Wendish, was Uncle Lionel's best friend. He still comes to visit every now and then, and he really gives me the creeps!

Well, I suppose I can't blame him for wanting to stay at the castle. Everyone loves it here. I'm sending along a copy of the tourist brochure (the place is open to the public on weekends) so you can read all about it. The brochure mentions the White Lady. I'm sure she's a great tourist gimmick.

If you look at the second floor map, you'll see the library where Clive been helping Jack.



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If you look at the second floor map, you'll see the library where I've been helping Jack catalog Uncle Lionel's collection of books and manuscripts. Lionel didn't spend his time at home looking after the estate the way Jack does. Instead he used up the family fortune travelling all around the world. His last trip was to the Amazon River in South America where he caught some sort of fatal jungle disease.

The last months of Lionel's life were spent here in bed, and the castle was opened to the public in order to pay off his debts and medical bills. When Lionel dies, Jack inherited everything but he still hasn't been able to straighten out the finances. Supposedly Lionel hid a valuable treasure somewhere in the castle. If we can't find it, we will have to sell off the family heirlooms to pay Lionel's debts. :(

An antique dealer named Montague Hyde is always toddling down from London to see what can get his hands on. I should be nicer to Mr. Hyde, who isn't such a bad sort, but every time I see him I'm reminded that all these beautiful things, some of which have been in the family for six or seven hundred years, might be on their way out the door. I think it should all be kept here forever.

I could go on and on about Cornwall and the castle and the strange habits of the upper crust, but I need to wade through a few more of Lionel's papers before dinner. I told Jack that I'd keep on with the cataloguing, even though I'm no longer his secretary. Who wants him bringing another woman in here? :)

Well, I hope to hear from you soon. I miss you and the rest of the gang and can't wait for you to come visit. It might be a long way, but how often do you get to stay in a "HAUNTED" castle!!

Lots of love,
Tamara