

4898 Villa Isler

Stresa

Vago Maggiore

26th May 1896

My dearest Pippa,

Many high thanks for your letter though you stopped in the middle of the most interesting part. This time I have some news: Lili is engaged to be married. The gentleman is the Herr Kurlbaum who was with us at Ahledorf. He proposed there & for a long time Lili could not make up her mind. Then Mr Siemens had to be told and he was away on his travels: so that what with one thing & another nothing was settled till yesterday when the young man arrived in the morning

and they were engaged. The servants were all highly delighted of course especially Paltano, the old Italian gardener, who bustled about in great excitement cutting flowers & making wreaths. In the afternoon we all went out for a long walk so that the servants should be able to decorate the house in peace: Leli & Kurlbaum went on ahead to send a telegram to his father and somehow managed to miss us at the rendezvous. When we returned in the evening we found the villa trimmed with coccineus from head to foot & looking most festive. After dinner the Stena musical society persuaded us until twelve o'clock at least; their performance which was a little quaint even at the beginning

became more & more straggling as the time went on, because between each piece Paltano hurried round filling their places with Chianti.

I can't think why Leli couldn't make up her mind at once as she evidently devoted to him: as also he to her. Though not ~~so~~ handsome he is very worthy and respectable and wears a beaming smile delighted to see Mr. & Mrs. Siemens as both very much pleased so all is well. Kurlbaum is in a the Technical School & is supposed to have very good prospects.

We have been for many long expeditions the other day Mrs. Siemens, the old Herr Reinhardt, Marie & I drove to Caarbis to see a villa which was for sale. We had lunch in the hotel & in the same room the deputato was giving a dinner to his

constituents: it was a most melancholy performance. After lunch we walked forth to see the Orvido. Here we very nearly perished: the Orvido is a waterfall ~~at which~~ one reaches in a boat by a long, ^{narrow} winding passage with high rocky sides & immensely deep. Our boat was extremely rickety & the boatman to say the least gay: if we had moved an eyelash the boat would have upset & it would have been impossible to save myself. The Reinbarts were very charming & sad to say they have now gone away: Carl Anders the objectionable young man is left alone in his glory. He ~~thinks~~ ~~himself~~ ~~ability~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~with~~ ~~this~~ has introduced a young crane called Lieutenant Simons who is recovering from a horrible illness brought on by influenza: his colonel, the Duke of Schaumburg Lippe has left

him his villa here. His head is shaved -
he is growing a beard: otherwise he is not
bad.

It has just occurred to me that I
ought soon to be returning home. The
Siemens have got the villa till the
20th of June & on the 6th I shall have
been away two months. I am seized
with terror at the thoughts of the whole
Greek language before me, not to mention
much other work, & if it could be
managed, I really think I ought to be
back shortly. It is rather painful as I
believe they expect me to go back with
them to Berlin.

I must now say

Farewell

Love to the family

Persel