

Dear Camilla



Dear Camilla,

A few months ago there was a big wedding on television and I was overwhelmed at the sight of the very attractive young bridesmaid. Now I see her even in my dreams and I have become completely obsessed by her. A peculiarity of this fixation is that I can never remember her face, only a rear view of her. Am I going mad? **Hannibal, Somerset**

Dear Hannibal,

Yours is a very common condition amongst Englishmen of all ages and indeed the affliction has reached epidemic levels. However help is at hand – just go to www.pippasass.com where you will be able to indulge your passion and to network with fellow sufferers, which may help.



Dear Camilla,

Each week my wife leaves me for several days to go to London. She freely admits that she walks the streets of Soho when she is there and I am beginning to worry about her. She says she works for an advertising agency, which as you know is a rough trade, and even worse she is in the media department, dealing with multiple insertions daily. Should I find her work here on a farm?

SC, Somerset



Dear SC,

It is unlikely that your wife would settle on a farm – she would find the living too soft. She is used to a punishing regime of four-course lunches with a minimum half-bottle of Burgundy every day and farms cannot offer arduous three-hour lunch breaks. Nor do they do back-breaking champagne breakfasts and media launches. Best to let nature take its course, as her liver most certainly will....

Dear Camilla,

My husband has become a stranger to me. For the last few years he has spent all his spare time on a secret project in the garden shed. I don't know what it is but in his sleep he snores with a German accent and often murmurs 'Mein Leibling Panzer' and rambles on about a new life in Poland. I'm so worried that he's going to make tracks– can you help? **KW, Somerset**

Dear KW,

Don't worry - this is rare but treatable condition in middle-aged men and is popularly known as Anorakus Militarius or Erwin's disease. The cure is rather expensive but always effective. You must take him on a long holiday to North Africa – Libya suggests itself – and let him drive back and forth along the desert roads for a few weeks. Finish up with a romantic weekend in Tobruck. A few verses of 'Lili Marleen' sung to him each evening will work wonders too.

Dear Camilla

I have a knotty problem for you. I am a distinguished amateur thespian, specifically in the field of village pantomimes, but in recent years I have become the victim of typecasting and all I am ever offered now is the part of a tree. I thought my career was blossoming and I wanted to branch out but the director just doesn't twig this. I have been an oak of my generation and I deserve better. I nearly played that Henry V once.

TC, Somerset



Dear TC,

Don't be such a sap. Take a leaf from my book and stick to what you're best at – don't spread yourself too thinly and stop pining for what you can't have. The director probably saw the tree as the full realisation of your potential and at root you know he's right. Just log it down to experience - enjoy the groans from the audience and take your bough at the end of the evening.

Dear Camilla

For some years now my wife and I have owned a property in rural France, spending several months a year there. Recently we have started to worry that we are going native – for instance, we find ourselves shrugging our shoulders unnecessarily, even when we know the answer to something. Also when I cycled to John O'Groats recently I felt impelled to hang strings of onions around my neck. We dangle Gauloises cigarettes from the corners of our mouths – especially for photographs – even though we don't smoke. And when we visit Paris we feel an uncontrollable urge to be rude to tourists and unco-operative to everybody generally.

Can anything be done? **RR, Somerset**



Dear RR,

I fear that the die is cast and it is too late to help you. This is an insidious condition and you are just starting down a very slippery slope. Soon you will feel the urge to panic and run around in circles over the slightest problem and the phrases 'Zut alors!', 'Mon Dieu' and 'Merde Mille Fois' will enter your vocabularies. Your wife will take three hours to dress each morning and you will start walking backwards every time you meet Germans. You will also develop an increasing contempt for the English. You could try switching to Malvern Water but even that will