

The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

You will not like what I am going to tell you, today, but it is absolutely correct. There are only 2 kinds of people in this world: They are the masters; and, the servants. Just keep seated! Don't jump up, yet! Read on, first. The masters are people, such as me and you. The servants are people, such a Bo-Bo and his ilk. In the past, I never would have come to this conclusion, but something happened, just last week, something which made me realise the truth of the categorisation of people of this world of ours. What happened was that I went shopping in Lane Crawford in Pacific Place and bought myself a new Pucci dress. Pucci is a lovely Italian brand of clothing. It fits my little torso so well, with the shimmering silk, outlining my lithe form, that I cannot resist buying the clothes. I took Bo-Bo with me to the Pucci Boutique at Lane Crawford because I reasoned that somebody had to carry my bags if I decided to buy some more dresses. I walked into the departmental store and went directly to the Pucci Boutique and started looking at some of the latest designs. After about 10 minutes, with nobody to help me, I asked Bo-Bo to call for a shop assistant. There was none available, he told me. Now, I know who beneficially owns Lane Crawford and could not believe that Mr Peter Woo's shop would not be organised properly. I learned, quickly, that it is not even organised, let alone organised properly. There appears to be nobody in visible charge of the small, uniformed staff of females, walking here and there, talking on their mobile telephones or chatting among themselves. I was getting frustrated and Bo-Bo could see how I felt. He took charge and walked over to a gaggle of shop girls and said: 'Am I bothering you? My wife would like some help!' The girls looked at Bo-Bo and, then, one of them muttered something and wandered off. Then, into the Pucci Boutique came a very grouchy looking young lady, wearing a black uniform, who said something to the effect that she was there to assist me. I told her of my interest in 2 dresses. She nodded and, then, she left without a smile or a how-de-do. Then, along came a very nice young lady who helped me and I ended up spending about \$HK23,000 on some dresses and one blouse. On the way out of the shop, Bo-Bo berated me, saying that if he had run his business in the manner of Lane Crawford, he would have been bankrupt a long time ago. He, then, pointed out a shop lady, chatting with a security man (I presumed that that was this man's job because what else would he be doing in a woman's part of the shop). 'What do you think they are saying? Making a date for tonight?' Bo-Bo commented. He was right. The entire place was devoid of any kind of discipline, with nobody in visible control. Girls were going into a room in a corner of the Pucci Boutique, a room which was, obviously, an inner sanctum, and returning with crumbs on their mouth and on their black uniforms. Entire sections of the store were deserts: There was no service, at all. And to think that it was only a few years ago that Lane Crawford was 'the' place to shop! I recall when Mr Robert Huthart Senior was the Managing Director of Lane Crawford, At that time, people felt proud to walk down the road, carrying a bag, embossed with the name, Lane Crawford. This shop has, always, been expensive, but, in days of yore, one did not mind the added expense because it was such a pleasure, doing one's shopping in a store where service was known to be of the highest standard. Today, Lane Crawford has no service, at all, unless one is very lucky.

Which brings me back to the matter of master and servant. Would it be possible to take the cowboy off the horse? The answer: Never! The same is true of the shop girls of Lane Crawford, the waitresses of restaurants (for the most part), the typists in an office, the street sweepers, the wet-market sales people, etc, etc, etc. The trouble is that, in this day and age, it is easier to live, allowing somebody else to do the thinking. Some people just do not want to be elevated from their allotted stations in life; they are happy with their lot; they have little to no ambition, just as long as they have a sufficiency of money to fulfill their requirements, whatever that may be. These are the servants of the world. They will, always, be servants. For us, however, we are never satisfied with our lot and are, always, looking to improve ourselves, to rise in

rank from one plateau to the next. For us, My Dear Grandchild, there must, always, be the chance that there is that gold ring to be plucked as we ride the merry-go-round of life. I am not stating that there is anything wrong with being a servant, but, for me, I do not want to be counted as one of this kind. The leaders of countries, from Mr George W. Bush of the United States to Mr Vladimir Putin of Russia to Akhenaton of Egypt, they are all servants. For Mr George W. Bush, as you are aware, he was an absolute failure at the various businesses that he attempted, prior to his father, bankrolling him to attain the Presidency of the United States of America, and, as for Mr Vladimir Putin, originally, he was only a colonel in the KGB, the Russian Secret Service, when the country was called the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics and when laws were promulgated whenever there was a need for them. Akhenaton, on the other hand, the first-recorded monotheistic leader of what was, once, the greatest civilisations of all times, was, plain mad, according to the history of the country, and he was only too happy to be known as a servant of Aton, the only God. The great men of the world have, always, been the masters and they have been respected for their deserved rank. These people have always been willing to take chances in order to elevate their positions, not in society, mind you, but in the pursuit of excellence in their chosen endeavours. They are the true masters of all that they survey.

Aha! And here comes Bo-Bo, my fat frog of a husband-servant, who is only too happy to carry my bags and to drive me around town when I need to go shopping.

Talk to you, later.

Chief Lady

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