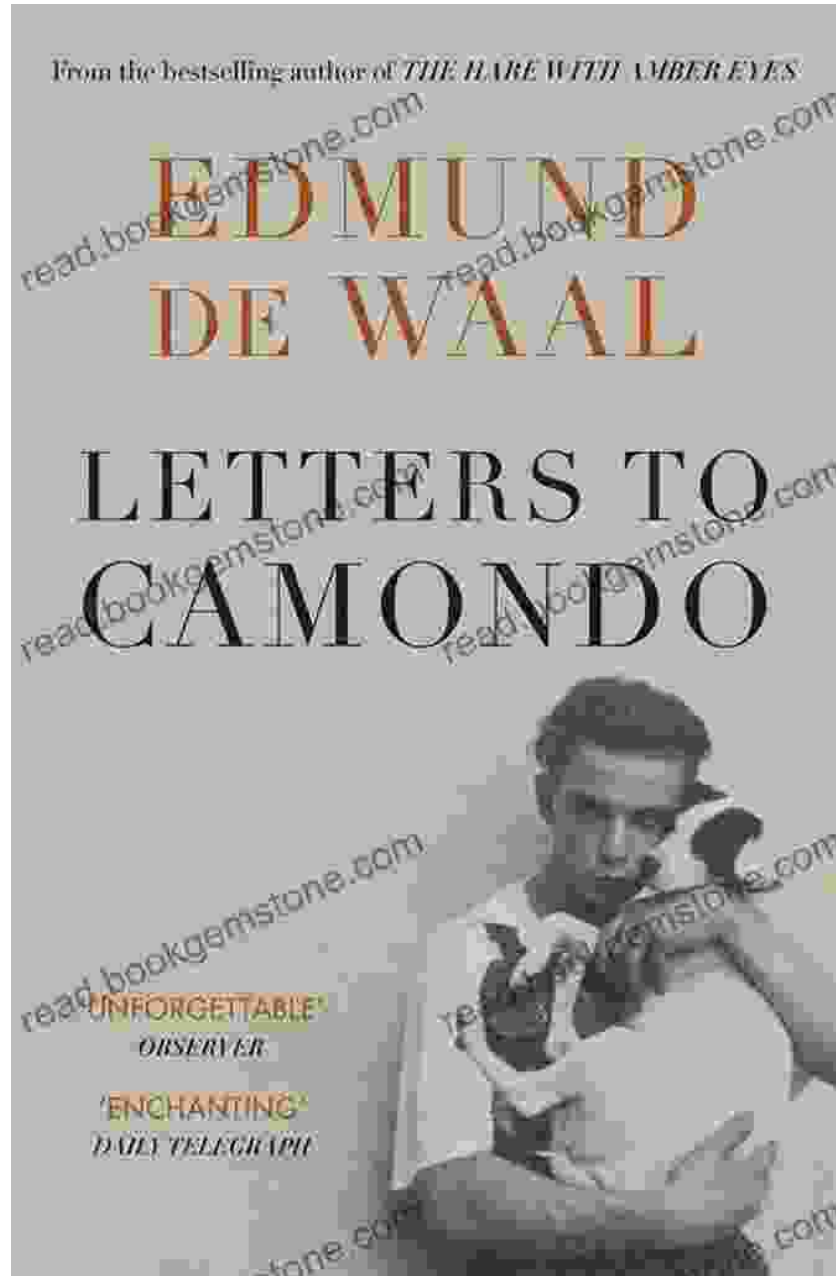
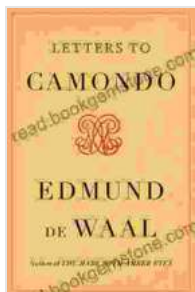


# Letters to Camondo: An Exploration of Family, Memory, and the Holocaust



Letters to Camondo is a poignant and thought-provoking memoir by British artist and writer Edmund de Waal. The book, published in 2011, is a collection of letters addressed to de Waal's great-uncle, Charles de

Camondo, a prominent art collector and patron of the arts who lived in Paris in the early 20th century. Through these letters, de Waal explores the complexities of family history, loss, and the enduring power of objects.



### **Letters to Camondo** by Edmund De Waal

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 69788 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Print length	: 186 pages



## **The Camondo Family**

The Camondo family was a wealthy and influential banking family of Sephardic Jewish descent. They lived in France for generations, and by the early 20th century, they had amassed a significant collection of art and antiques. Charles de Camondo, the great-uncle to whom de Waal's letters are addressed, was a particularly passionate collector. He lived in a grand mansion in Paris's 16th arrondissement, which he filled with his collection of 18th-century French furniture and Asian art.

Charles de Camondo was a prominent figure in Parisian society. He was a friend and patron of many artists and writers, including Marcel Proust and Claude Monet. He was also a generous philanthropist, supporting various Jewish charities and institutions.

## **The Holocaust**

In the summer of 1943, Charles de Camondo and his wife, Elise, were arrested by the Nazis and deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. They were both murdered upon arrival. Their 16-year-old son, Nissim, was also arrested and deported to Auschwitz, where he was killed in 1944.

The Camondo mansion was looted by the Nazis, and their art collection was dispersed. Some of the works were recovered after the war, but many others were lost or destroyed.

### **Edmund de Waal and "Letters to Camondo"**

Edmund de Waal is a British artist and writer who was born in Nottingham in 1964. He is a great-nephew of Charles de Camondo, and as a child, he often visited his great-uncle's mansion in Paris.

After his great-uncle's death, de Waal inherited a collection of 264 Japanese netsuke, which had been given to Charles de Camondo by his father. These netsuke, small carved objects that were used to secure cords on Japanese clothing, became the inspiration for de Waal's book, "Letters to Camondo."

In the book, de Waal writes a series of letters to his great-uncle, reflecting on their family history, the loss of the Camondo family during the Holocaust, and the enduring power of objects. The letters are beautifully written and deeply moving. They offer a unique and personal perspective on one of the darkest chapters in human history.

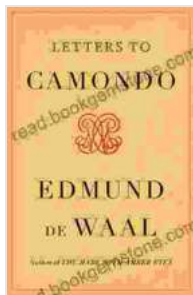
### **Themes in "Letters to Camondo"**

"Letters to Camondo" explores a number of complex and important themes, including:

- \* The power of objects to evoke memories and emotions
- \* The importance of family history and tradition
- \* The fragility of life and the inevitability of loss
- \* The enduring legacy of the Holocaust

De Waal writes with great sensitivity and insight about these themes. He does not shy away from difficult topics, but he also finds moments of beauty and hope amidst the darkness.

"Letters to Camondo" is a powerful and moving memoir that explores the intersection of family, memory, and the Holocaust. Through a series of beautifully written letters, de Waal delves into the complexities of human experience. He offers a unique and personal perspective on one of the darkest chapters in human history, while also finding moments of beauty and hope. "Letters to Camondo" is a must-read for anyone interested in history, family, or the human condition.



### Letters to Camondo by Edmund De Waal

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

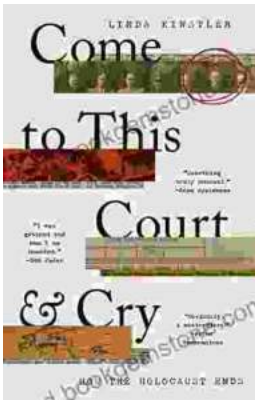
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