

*Capt. B. Curruthers,  
c/o Home Office,  
Westminster,  
London.*

*The British Residence,  
Mysore,  
India.*

*Dear Captain Curruthers,*

*I hope you will forgive my impertinence in contacting you directly regarding this matter, but my late fiancé insisted I should do so if anything were to happen to him. My dearest Oswald was foully murdered by persons unknown, just this last week, so I am hoping you will be willing to return to India to find his killers.*

*This whole episode has been such a shock that I do not know where to begin, so maybe I should explain who I am. My name is Elizabeth Montague and I am the daughter of Sir Archibald Montague, the British Resident of the Princely State of Mysore in the Indian Empire. A year ago, I became engaged to be married to Major Oswald Carew of the Indian Army. Oswald has, on several occasions, reiterated his high opinion of yourself as a friend and as an officer and has related to me a number of the experiences you shared while hunting criminals in this land. He was most adamant that, should any of his foes bring about an end to his career, I should seek you out to bring the perpetrators to justice.*

*The circumstances surrounding this are bizarre, I will admit. He and his squadron had just returned from chasing bandits (we have many in this region, inspired by one of the more obscure Hindoo deities) and was somewhat worse for wear: his uniform torn, his cap missing and a nasty gash upon his brow. We met briefly and, although he was extremely pleased at the success of his mission, he pleaded exhaustion and the need to clean himself up. As he left, he tried to press upon me a bright green gemstone that he said he had extracted from the statue of a god worshipped by the bandits. I refused it, believing that such a treasure belonged to the Maharajah, and we parted in some acrimony.*

*That evening, my father had planned a lavish ball to celebrate my twenty-first birthday and all the social elite of Mysore were present. Despite our argument of the morning, I fully expected my fiancé to be present and*

*was somewhat upset when he failed to appear, becoming more so as the evening went on. Eventually, I made my excuses and went looking for him. I found the door to his quarters locked, but one of the other officers assured me he was within. When knocking produced no response, he broke the door in - we found my beloved lying in the middle of the floor in a pool of his own blood, with a curiously-ornate dagger in his heart.*

*The Mysore investigators have been unable, or unwilling, to determine who killed him, how they did it or why. All I get from them is the "theory" that he surprised a common burglar - but his quarters are on the second floor of the Residence!*

*I should note that the gemstone is gone.*

*I need someone I can trust to track down his killer: I beg of you to do this for me. If you come to the Residence at Mysore, you will find that I have ensured Oswald's room is preserved as it was.*

*Telegraph me to confirm your acceptance; I will do what I can to ease your journey to us.*

*Yours, in Hope,*

*Elizabeth Montague*