

*The first transcription Session with Madame Corsique was a peculiar One, as was the noble Lady Herself. While It might have been fair to call Her an “odd Bird” —She certainly would be r eferred to as such back Home — here, such Pronunciations go against Etiquette and friendly Euphemisms are used instead. Thus, when the Maid described the Madame as “Esoteric”, I did not expect to be presented with such a downright queer Person.*

*The Room in which She was waiting to receive Me looked sterile and the numerous Windows are blown open. Finding Myself in the freezing-, and empty-Room, I moved to close the Window closest to Myself when a Shriek stopped Me in my Tracks.*

*Madame Corsique has been standing by one of the larger Windows, wearing a Dress of Fabric so Transparent that it could not have given much Comfort in the chilling Winds. She instructed Me to leave the Window open and proceeded to walk — or rather to glide — over to the Desk perched in the Centre of the Room.*

*I informed her of the Rheumatism in my Hands, in light of which I would not be able to work with the Windows open unless a hefty Fire was constructed in the Hearth. While I mean the Comment of the Hearth as a Joke — something of an Icebreaker in for the heat-forsaken Room — Madame Corsique chose to take my Comment at face Value and instructed the Maid to produce a Fire and even to ready me a Jug of boiling Water as to allow me to work in the early morning Chill.*

*After this Business concluded, another Maid was called to bring forth Utensils whith which I was to write.*

*The Paper was clearly expensive, and as White as our beautiful Lyra the day She was born. The Ink — though it looked a strange shade of Red and smelled of the Spices brought to England by the East India Company — was an absolute Delight to write with, and seemed to be immune to staining.*

*After Madame Corsique had dictated roughly a Paragraph of Text — in Greek I remind You — She suddenly stopped and asked if I understood what She had just dictated to Me. I explained to Her that it had been some Time since I have dusted off my Copy of Homer, but that I nevertheless understood quite well what She was saying. My Answer must have dissatisfied Her because she chose to move to French for the following Paragraph.*

*This Process repeated a number of Times until We arrived at Hungarian which — I had to admit to Her — I had understood Nothing of. After looking over my Work, She simply stated “That will do”, and continued the remainder of our Session in the Eastern Language.*

*I have spoken to You before about taxing Clients, but None compare to Madame Corsique. Even after just one Day I am entirely Spent. She has thoroughly drained my Ability both to listen and to think. While the Hungarian Spelling is none too complicated, and Madame Corsique speaks softly and slowly, transcribing a Language which One does not speak, is by far the most complicated Task a Member of my Profession may be given.*

*I must rest now, let my Mind Wonder and Dream of Home, of You, and of Lyra. It will not be long before I am called on again, as Madame Corsique insisted we move tomorrow’s Session yet an hour earlier.*

*All the Best for You and the Baby,*

*Christopher*