man, that's appalling.

ARMSTRONG. Needs must. We can have any number of average, everyday corpses. They're two a penny. Literally, at this time of year, when people are dropping like flies. But an unusual specimen must be ordered in advance. I thought you knew that?

ROGET. I suppose I didn't think about it. I didn't ask where they came from, I assumed ...

ARMSTRONG. What? That they climbed onto the dissecting table of their own accord?

ROGET. No no no, of course not, I just ... well I suppose I chose not to wonder. (He bats the shuttlecock to Armstrong.)

ARMSTRONG. You didn't want to sully yourself with thoughts of such vile trade. You're a romantic, Roget —

ROGET. I think more precisely, I am a man of delicate sensibilities —

ARMSTRONG. Useless, not to say dangerous qualities in a man of science.

ROGET. D'you never have qualms? D'you exist solely in the burning fires of certainty?

ARMSTRONG. Digging up corpses is necessary if we're to torture out of the dark ages. You can dissect a stolen body with moral qualms or with none at all and it won't make a blind bit of difference to what you discover. Discovery is neutral. Ethics should be left to philosophers and priests. I've never had a moral qualm in my life, and it would be death to science if I did. That's why I'll be remembered as a great physician Roget, and you'll be forgotten as a man who made lists. (Roget passes him a drop shot which he fails to anticipate and misses.) Bastard. (Fenwick appears. They stop playing, guiltily.)

ROGET. Sir — we were just, er —

ARMSTRONG. It was very cold outside sir.

FENWICK. Useless girls, both of you. Anyway, Supper's about to be served. (They go with him. Lights down. Maria reads a letter over scene change.)

MARIA. "Dear Edward,

You are right, England is cold and bleak, and so, I might add is my heart. Either distance has dimmed your perception of me, or you never looked properly at me from the start. Imagine my eyes again Edward. Now write and tell me what colour they appear in your imagination. Your early letters were so full of longing for me and for home, but now I sense a reluctance to return which cannot entirely be explained by the prevailing weather conditions. I hear, via a Mr. Roger Thornton, who has recently returned from Lucknow, that a certain Miss Cholmondely has stayed in India rather longer than expected. Could this be the same musical creature you mention in your letters? She who sinks into a dead faint when confronted by native antiquities? Her eyes, I gather, are a quite startling blue. I note that when you think of England now you remember dead boys frozen in the top meadow. Hitherto you imagined soft sunlight and balmy breezes and gentle Englishmen full of decorum and equanimity. I now realise that your vision of England was as flawed as your recollection of my eyes. Yes, it is true that here we may freeze to death in Winter. Indeed our Summers are mild. But temperate we are not. Need I remind you that we have had bloody riots here for at least six months, and that my father, the finest Englishman I know, has never been anything less than passionate. As you know Edward, I have long been regarded as the mild, perhaps even silly half of the heavenly twins, very much in Harriet's poetical shadow. That, presumably, is what attracted you to me in the first place. (But Miss Cholmondely is clearly the better swooner) I find now however, that anger has provoked my intellect like a spark igniting a long dormant volcano. I await your reply with interest.

Sincerely, Maria Fenwick."