

TO ENTICE A SPY by Diane Scott Lewis

EXCERPT

Eseld finished her punch and looked away.

“I was being friendly with the viscount, on a purely decent level, on my part.”

“I’m worried about you. Men can take advantage.

As in being purely mercenary.” Robert’s emotion rose to the surface, rawer than he wished. “I want you to be very cautious.”

“I’m aware of greedy men. And I’m not romantically involved, if that’s what concerns you.” She didn’t sound angry, more a question. A yearning?

“Are you collecting friends or inquiring where you should not?” He toned down his rhetoric, not wishing to upset her.

“That again. You think me foolish, or incapable.”

Her reply was soft despite what she stated. She didn’t deny her motives.

He moved closer. His heartbeat thudded; was she investigating a possible spy as he first surmised?

“You are one of the most capable women I know. Please, confide in me.”

They appeared to still dance around one another—this time with words.

She turned and faced him. “I don’t want us to be at odds.”

She paused for a moment and lightly touched his stock. “Is that all you seek, me to confide? Am I but a contrary girl who must be guided by you?”

“Truthfully, as we were always truthful in our youth, I want to kiss you.”

He cupped her upper arms and couldn’t believe he’d said that aloud. Her jasmine perfume invaded his senses.

“Pardon my boldness. I’m not of your station anymore, am I?”

“That doesn’t matter to me,” she whispered. “But aren’t you still in mourning?”