

“The little library was so crowded I could not tell whose body lay on the floor. Panic ensued as more guests and servants rushed into the little library. ‘Who is it?’ a woman whispered. The room smelled of sweat, tears, and the metallic scent of blood—a scent I only knew from scraping my knees as a child, pricking my finger on a rose bush, and witnessing the manor chef accidentally slide a cooking knife across her bare skin. But I had never smelled blood as I did at that moment—it was strong, and there must have been a lot of it.

‘A murder! Who could ever believe such a thing?’ another murmured.

My lip trembled as I anxiously craned my head back and forth to get a better view of the body. All I could see was a bloodied hand with a pool of more blood beside it stretching across and staining Mother’s favorite rug. I concurred with the last voice: I could never believe a murder would happen in my own home.”

-An Excerpt from *Inspector Mage: Blood on the Floor*