

# MYTH & INTERPRETATION



A Gwen Finnegan Novella

DEVON ELLINGTON

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## About the Novella and Buy Links



### **MYTH & INTERPRETATION**

Stuck in NYC when plans for their next expedition fall through, Gwen and Justin accept teaching jobs at different local universities. Adjusting to their relationship, and juggling the academic and emotional demands of their students, they are embroiled in two different, disturbing, paranormal situations that have more than one unusual crossing point. Can they work together to find the answers? Or are new temptations too much to resist? For whom are they willing to put their lives on the line?

This between-the-books novella takes place in New York City, shortly after the action in *Tracking Medusa* ends and *The Balthazaar Treasure* begins.

Released by Bluestockings and Gentlemen Press July 2018

Universal Buy link:

<https://www.books2read.com/u/4XKL57>

## About the Series



Dr. Gwen Finnegan is a noted archaeologist and anthropologist, who specializes in myth. She's also a practicing witch, who knows how myth and science intersect, and that a belief in science, evidence, and data doesn't negate the existence of the supernatural.

A modern woman with life and loves, she makes no apologies and gives no explanations for her choices. Her life is complicated by her past, especially ex-lover Karl Vanreth-DeGroot, sometimes an ally, sometimes a challenger.

Justin Yates is smart and shy, seemingly caught in a never-ending cycle of "always the assistant" in the library, always choosing the wrong woman.

When Gwen and Justin meet and go on the run to find the missing head of a Medusa statue, connected to the death of Gwen's lover, sparks fly on every level.

The series follows Gwen and Justin's evolving relationship across the globe, and how it challenges their growing careers. It also includes some of Gwen's adventures pre-Justin.

Exotic locations, adventure, romance, and the paranormal – the Gwen Finnegan Mysteries have them all.

Website for the Gwen Finnegan Mysteries:

<https://gwenfinneganmysteries.devonellingtonwork.com>

Facebook page for the Gwen Finnegan Mysteries:

<https://www.facebook.com/GwenFinneganMysteries/>

## Excerpt #1

A movement caught Jack's eye. "Yes? Back there? Carrie, can you give him the mic?"

"This is for Dr. Finnegan." The voice was low and well-modulated, with a British inflection. Gwen shaded her eyes with her hands. She couldn't see the figure well, but it was tall, lean, male. She felt the push at her shield. This was the one testing her. "Did you notice anything unusual in The Medusa case? Was it tied into any unusual events you previously encountered?"

Gwen noticed Justin shift in his chair. He'd picked up on something odd from this guy, too. She smiled. "There are so many ways to answer that," she said. "I could ask you to define 'unusual'--"

"I believe, Dr. Finnegan, you know quite well what I mean." The man's tone combined ice and arrogance.

"'There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy'," Gwen quoted.

"I seriously doubt that."

"I'm sure you recognize that quote from your illustrious countryman."

"That still doesn't answer my question."

"Is your question sincere?"

The questioner was taken aback. "Y-yes, Dr. Finnegan. It is."

"In that case, I will give you a sincere answer. Many unusual things happened during the time we tracked The Medusa head. Some of it reached back many years, and through many years' worth of associations. *All* of it was quite out of the realm of what I consider 'ordinary'."

There was a beat. Jack Lemur cleared his throat and began to say something, but the questioner cut him off. "Mr. Yates, did you look into The Medusa's eyes?"

Gwen felt Justin's wariness. "The statue? I spent a lot of time staring at every inch of the statue. That's part of what we do -- learn the artifacts we handle intimately."

"Intimately' -- interesting choice of word." The questioner's tone made Justin wince, and Gwen bit back a smile. An uncomfortable titter ran through the audience.

## Excerpt #2

Justin was grateful he'd prepared most of his lectures so far in advance. He was comfortable with the material, and he could make it through the lecture without worrying. He'd have to find a way to concentrate on the papers that were turned in today.

He pulled the piles Louis collected together, shoved them into a manila folder, and jammed them into his bag. He needed to get back to the hospital. His dad was scheduled for release in a few days, and Justin had the irrational fear he'd never make it out. He hadn't dared to share this fear with Gwen. She'd comfort him, be logical, and he didn't want that right now.

"Mr. Yates?"

He jerked his head up to see a young woman in front of his desk. He searched his memory. Florence. The Mayans. "Jessica? Jessica Sayles?"

"Yes. I'm glad you're back."

"Good to be back." It sounded false and hollow. If he reached, he could remember the joy his first days of teaching gave him. They felt far away. "How can I help you?"

"I'm not sure."

He noticed she looked tired. "Do you need an extension on the paper?"

"N-no, nothing like that. I turned it in. I hope you like it." She looked down, her hair falling over her face, hiding it. After a minute, she took a deep breath, brushed her hair back and looked at him. "I'm afraid. And because you and Dr. Finnegan have the experiences you have, I thought you could help me."

"Um, sure, I'll try?" It sounded lame to Justin's ears, but that was the best he could do.

Jessica took a deep breath and exhaled. "I think my roommate, Gina? The one who's in Dr. Finnegan's seminar? I think she's trying to kill me."



### Excerpt #3

He wiped his mouth with his bloodied knuckles and re-sheathed his sword to its carrier on his back. Then, he pulled a vial out of the inside of his vest and scooped the ashes into it. He paused, picking up an object from the floor. "This yours?"

She stared at it. "My moonstone."

"Thought I recognized it from your office."

"The last time I saw it, Gina was handling it."

Alec looked up at her. "She lives 'round the corner."

They cleaned up. Gwen wrapped the moonstone in a paper towel and tucked it into her briefcase. Alec indicated the open window, and they used it to access the fire escape. Gwen glanced up at the security cameras.

"Don't worry, they're all a blur," Alec told her.

*Glamoury.* Gwen nodded and clattered down the metal steps after him, trying not to slip in the snow. When they reached the last platform, Alec grabbed the bottom bar, lowered himself, and dropped the last few feet to the pavement. He turned and caught her hips as she dropped, steadying her. His hands slid up to her waist as her hands found his shoulders and she hit the ground. They stood for an instant, the magic thrumming between them, before Gwen broke the contact.

It was dark now, easier to melt into the shadows. Alec limped, and Gwen slowed down to his pace. "Pretty petty to conjure up a pair of flesh-eating demons because I gave her a B."

"She's used to getting her own way. Without working for it." He sighed. "Could feel the force of the conjuration twenty blocks away."

"A lot of people could have been hurt. Died--"

Alec cut her off, his tone harsh. "They didn't. I killed three before the other two got to you. They had a purpose. You."

## Q & A With Devon Ellington

**Question:** Talk a little bit about how *Myth & Interpretation* came about.

**Devon Ellington:** Originally, a handful of the scenes were in the opening chapters of the second Gwen Finnegan mystery, *The Balthazaar Treasure*. But they didn't work. They slowed down the story. Yet, the readers needed to know what happened in between the end of *Tracking Medusa* and the beginning of *Balthazaar*. I talked to my editor. She suggested breaking it off and doing a novella. I outlined it; she worked with me to pare it down so it didn't become a novel. And some characters that are vital to the series get proper introductions here.

**Q: Justin is in an interesting position here. He's always been the assistant. He's always been in the position of less power. But here, he is the leader, especially when it comes to helping his student, Jessica.**

**DE:** Yes, he's growing into himself. He made huge strides when he and Gwen teamed up to find the Medusa statue. Now, he's the teacher and he's responsible for the next generation of his profession. Gwen's done this before; he's finding his way.

**Q: Plus, they have to work out the dynamics of their own relationship.**

**DE:** Which isn't easy. Gwen's been married and divorced. She's worked and lived all over the world, and experienced her share of relationships. She knows what she needs and won't put up with in a relationship. Justin's still finding out, and he's still playing by the rules he's used to. They have to navigate. Gwen's approach is simple: I love you and trust you. No games. Justin is used to games.

**Q: At the same time, what Gwen chooses not to tell him here is interesting. You'd expect her not to want to have any secrets from him.**

**DE:** Yes, and that choice is part of what fuels their conflict during *Balthazaar Treasure*. She believes that telling him certain things – can't

mention them here or they're spoilers – would cause the type of drama between them she wants to avoid. Yet the choice to avoid drama now means she has to deal with it further down the line.

**Q: And Karl stirs the pot. Again.**

**DE:** As Karl does. Especially when it can annoy Justin.

**Q: They stayed in New York for this adventure.**

**DE:** And Gwen can't wait to get back in the field. She loves her home, but she loves being out and about even more. Now Justin's got field fever, too.

**Q: I kind of fell in love with all the students in Gwen's seminar. Even the ones who were a problem. Will we see more of them?**

**DE:** In the original outline, they grew into a tighter group and had more to do. But, again, it was too much for the scope of the piece. Their stories definitely go on; how much directly intersect with Gwen and Justin, I'm still working on defining it.

**Q: But we have to see more of Alec. And Jessica.**

**DE:** Don't worry. You will. In surprising ways!

**Q: New York was a huge character in the piece.**

**DE:** Yes, I'm creating my slightly alternate New York based on some of my favorite places. New York is rapidly changing, but my fictional New York, I hope, can retain some of my favorite places, add some fictional places, and still be believable for those who know the city well.

**Q: The crossover that happened between the worlds of Gwen Finnegan and the world of the Coventina Circle happened again, with the Soci t  Sortileger, the esoteric library on Orchard Street.**

**DE:** Yes, that was fun. Since Gwen lives in almost the same New York around the same time as Coventina, even though they move in different circles (no pun intended) most of the time, it makes sense that they would end up in some of the same places, even if they don't know each other.

**Q: Harry Delacourte – he’s getting around. Kind of hard not to fall in love with him.**

**DE:** He certainly is. He turns up in the next Coventina Circle, *Relics & Requiem*, too. Harry’s a busy boy. He and the staff of the library will likely cross over in several books in both series. He surprised me, though, when it turned out he was related to one of Gwen’s UK coven sisters. I have a feeling he’s full of more surprises. As are Gwen and Justin.

## About the Author



Devon Ellington is a full-time writer who publishes under half a dozen names in fiction and non-fiction. She is an internationally-produced playwright, radio, and screenwriter, editor, and teacher. In addition to the Gwen Finnegan mysteries, she writes the urban fantasy Jain Lazarus Adventures (as Devon Ellington), the Coventina Circle Paranormal Romantic Suspense Novels (as Devon Ellington) and the Not-Quite Cozy Nautical Namaste Mysteries (as Ava Dunne). She has a selection of short pieces across genre under the Delectable Digital Delights banner on the Devon Ellington Website ([www.devonellingtonwork.com](http://www.devonellingtonwork.com)). Her work is included in anthologies such as DEATH SPARKLES, ARDEUR, PERFECTLY PLUM, SIMPLE PLEASURES OF THE KITCHEN, GHOST STORIES OF THE MOGOLLON RIM, and FULL CIRCLE.

Visit the Gwen Finnegan website:

<http://gwenfinneganmysteries.devonellingtonwork.com>

Devon's Website: <http://www.devonellingtonwork.com>

and her blog in the writing life, Ink in My Coffee:

<http://devonellington.wordpress.com>.

