

THE MYSTERY OF THE RACING GREEN BENTLEY

A young woman “with the face of an angel and skin like fine porcelain” walked into the Malayan Motors showroom in Leng Kee Road one day and ordered a Bentley. Flipping through the colour sample catalogue, she pointed to a racing green swatch and exclaimed excitedly: “That’s the colour!”

So the order was placed and when it was ready some three months later, she came in to view it. “It’s wonderful, fine,” she said delightedly and wrote out a cheque in the region of S\$1 million. She asked for the car to be registered and walked out as every head turned to follow her every move. A week later, Malayan Motors got a call from her. She said: “I don’t want the car. I’ve changed my mind. It’s not the colour I want. Get rid of it.”

The salesman was perplexed. Why the sudden change of mind over the colour? And then he started worrying about the money they would undoubtedly lose on the sale. To re-do the entire car for another client would mean having to strip it down to bare metal, spray paint the car, not to mention having to change the interior trim as well. Plus, the transfer fee – two percent of the original retail price – would be sizeable.

Even if he could find someone else to buy it the way it was – that is, make a quick sale – it would probably have to go at a heavily discounted price. By his calculations, the frustrated sale would cost the company quite a bit of money. He told her it would cost her at least half a million dollars.

“That’s fine”, she said. “Just get rid of it! By the way, I want you to order for me another car, the same model but in Bentley’s beautiful signal red!”