



## THE CHARMER

Celeste Bradley, St. Martin's Press 2004

1. In **THE CHARMER**, Collis is dealing with the inability to fully use his left arm and hand due to being knocked off his horse by a careening cannonball in his first battle. Unlike in the movies where they seem to go off like bombs, cannonballs actually did the most damage by bouncing wildly through the battlefield, crushing men and horses with their weight and momentum. How does this knowledge change your perception of Collis's battle experience?
2. Rose is trying to overcome years as an abused servant. Do you think it is possible to truly leave fear and abuse behind us?
3. Because I felt like it, I made the Prince Regent younger and much more spry than he would have been in that year (although I think I nailed his famously capricious personality!). Is it appropriate to take such historical liberties for the sake of a fun story? Does the author have a responsibility beyond that of entertainment?
4. The tunnels and old rivers beneath London are real, except possibly the one leading to the Prince's bedchamber. There has been a small population of real people using/living in them for hundreds of years, much like the people living in the subway tunnels in New York. Can you see yourself taking refuge in a place like that? What makes you different from those who do, other than necessity?
5. I love Ethan Damont. He was actually created for my very first book, **FALLEN**, but my editor felt the role of gambler could be played just as well by a character named Eric. I saved Ethan in a special file for years, waiting for a chance to bring him back to life, and especially to give him his own story in **THE ROGUE**. As a reader, can you tell when a character has special meaning for an author?
6. Rose has many fears left from her former life. She fears the dark underground with all her childhood superstitions battling her recent education. Can we ever truly erase our earliest conditioning?
7. When Collis almost loses Rose in the flooding tunnel, he is forced to deal with his feelings for her. Why does possible loss sharpen our understanding of our own feelings? Why do we take people/things for granted until we nearly lose them?
8. Collis and Rose marry across a vast social distance. Do you think that could truly happen in that time? Do you think social status has any bearing on relationships today?