

Clara turned and ran from Jack, back toward the Avenue de La Chapelle.

As she approached the bench, slowing to a walk, the young woman placed the book at her side. She was young, twenty, perhaps twenty-five. Even in her distress, Clara saw that she was unusually lovely, with a delicacy in her skin that made her appear like a fashion model or an actress. An ingenue, a quick smile appearing on her lips. Clara closed her eyes, fighting against the rage she felt and the anguish of discovering how intensely she resented Jack's intrusion on her family.

"Clara?"

Clara stopped up short. Her breathing came from her in quick gasps. It was pained and hurried.

"May I talk with you?" the woman said in English. Her Parisian accent was quite pronounced. She laid a hand on the closed book, and inadvertently re-opened it as Clara tried to figure out who she was.

"Don't run away. Please. I've wanted to meet you."

"Who are you?"

"Me?" The woman looked down at the book, her fingers playing with a page that she turned to the right and left. "My name is Emma."

"Do I know you?"

"No." Emma looked up once more at Clara. "But now I am glad to meet you."

Clara looked over her shoulder. Jack stood with his back to the statue of the shrouded woman, watching the conversation. His face was downcast with a look of aggrieved worry.

"Because I'm your sister, Clara."