

thrilled from time to time by angelic songs, by distant echoes of organs, by rumours and voices not perceptible to other ears. Luminous figures presented themselves to her in the darkness, odours of Paradise carried her out of herself.

Thus a kind of sacred horror began to spread through the monastery as if through the presence of some occult power, as if through the imminence of some supernatural event. As a precaution the new convert was released from every obligation pertaining to servile work. All of her positions, all of her words, all of her glances were observed and commented upon with superstition. And the legend of her sanctity began to flower.

On the first of February in the year of Our Lord 1873, the voice of the virgin Anna became singularly hoarse and deep. Later her power of speech suddenly disappeared. This unexpected dumbness terrified the minds of the nuns. And all, standing around the convert, considered with mystic terror her ecstatic postures, the vague motions of her mute mouth and the immobility of her eyes from which overflowed at intervals inundations of tears. The lineaments of the sick woman, extenuated by long fastings, had now assumed a purity almost of ivory, while the entire outlines of her arteries now seemed to be visible,