

Bougainvilliers contended for the mastery. Outside his windows were placed the same table and long chair, and beside the last the other chair where Denise had sat—which had been placed there by Fate. The butler was, it appeared, a man of few ideas. He had arranged everything as before.

After his early coffee Lory went to the verandah and lay down by that empty chair. It was a brilliant morning, with a light keen air which has not its equal all the world over. The sun was powerful enough to draw the scent from the pinewoods, and the sea-breeze swept it up towards the mountains. Lory waited alone in the verandah all the morning. After luncheon the baron assisted him back to his long chair, and all the party came there and drank coffee. Coffee was one of Mademoiselle Brun's solaces in life. "It makes existence bearable," she said—"if it is hot enough." But she finished her cup quickly and went away. The baron was full of business. He received a score of letters during the day. At any moment the preliminaries of peace might now be signed. He had not even time for a cigarette. The baroness sat for some minutes looking at Lory, endeavouring to make him meet her shrewd eyes; but he was looking out over the plain of Les Ares. Denise had not sat down, but was standing rather restlessly at the edge of the verandah near the heliotrope which clambered up the supports. She had