

CHAPTER XXIX

THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF MONSIEUR URBAIN

It was an afternoon late in November. A wild wind was blowing, and shadows were flying across the country and the leafless woods which rushed and cried like the sea. A great full moon shone in the sky, chased over and constantly obscured by thin racing clouds, silver and copper-coloured on the blue-black depths of air.

Madame de la Marinière was alone in her old room. The candles were lighted on her work-table, her embroidery frame stood beside it, the needle carelessly stuck in; a fire of logs was flaming up the wide black chimney. Anne was not working, but wandering restlessly up and down the room. Once she went to a window and dragged it open; the moonlight flowed in, and with it a soft rough blast that blew the candles about wildly and made smoke and flames fly out from the fire. Anne hastily, with some difficulty, closed the window and fastened it again.

She had not waited very long when slow heavy feet came tramping through the stone court, the house door opened and shut with a clang, and Monsieur Urbain came into the room. As he