

added after a moment in her ear. "Yes, dearest, you are right. Embrace me, my children!"

Les Chouettes was shut up for seven years, and the country people were shy of passing it in the dusk, for they said that under the old oaks you might meet Monsieur Joseph with his gun and dog as of old, coming back from a day's shooting. When old Joubard heard that, he said — and his wife crossed herself at the saying — that he would rather meet Monsieur Joseph, dead, than any living gentleman of Anjou.

But there came a time when young life took possession again of Les Chouettes, and lovely little children played in the sandy court and picked wild flowers and ran after butterflies in the meadow; when Madame Ange de la Marinière wandered out in the soft twilight, without fear of ghosts or men, to meet her husband as he walked down the rugged lane from the *landes* after a long day's shooting.

And there were no plots now in Anjou, and neither Chouans nor police haunted the woods; for Napoleon was at St. Helena, and France could breathe throughout her provinces, for the iron bands were taken off her heart, and the young generation might grow up without being cut down in its flower.

It was at this time that Henriette de la Marinière decided to give Les Chouettes to her cousin Angelot, and finally to enter the convent where