

Epigraph

In the waning light of July 29, 1714, in Villon-sur-Sarthe, France, a girl named Adeline flees desperately towards the safety of the woods, casting aside the celebration of a distant wedding. Her flight cuts through the pastoral beauty of the countryside at sunset, transforming the idyllic scene into a tableau of fear and urgency. The air behind her crackles with the unseen threat of pursuit, not by torch-bearing mobs, but by something far more insidious and undefined. Echoing across the fields, the calls for "Adeline" serve only to hasten her steps, propelling her further into the unknown.

The narrative encapsulates a moment of profound transformation and foreboding, underscored by the imagery of falling white flowers from Adeline's hair, likened to a scattering of stars or a celestial map charting her inevitable fate. These flowers, and the constellation of freckles marking Adeline's face, symbolize the promises made by Estele Magritte—a figure from her past who spoke of love, life, and divine watchfulness. Yet, as Adeline runs, these symbols mock her with the reality of unreachd potentials and unfulfilled destiny. The seven freckles, representing loves never experienced, lives never lived, and gods never met, stand as bitter testaments to the gap between prophecy and reality.

Estele Magritte's opening words cast a shadow over Adeline's flight, evoking ancient and capricious deities whose benevolence cannot be assumed. The old gods, characterized by their mercurial nature, offer a stark warning against reckless appeals to the divine, especially those made in darkness. This backdrop of celestial indifference and archaic wisdom sets the stage for Adeline's plight, weaving a palpable tension between mortal desperation and the unfathomable decrees of the divine.

Adeline's refusal to look back, to acknowledge the life she's leaving behind, underscores a decisive break from the past. Her journey is not just a physical escape but a metaphysical leap into the uncertain embrace of the night and the woods, away from the predefined paths and into a realm where only shadows and gods tread. This moment encapsulates a universal theme of human endeavor—the relentless pursuit of agency in the face of destiny's immutable flow.