**Suzanne’s diary**

**15 March 2006**

Dear diary, it’s me, Suzanne. Since I last wrote something, everything’s falling apart.

Today, as I was coming out of the grocery store, I met a young girl Clara, and her grandmother, Alexandra, who were looking for information about the Judes camp. I don't remember much, but as they were very pleasant, we talked for a while. And then, before we parted ways, Clara took a spoon out of her bag. I recognised it right away, it was Angel's spoon! And then it all came back to me... When I got home, I went straight up to the attic to find you... My God! So many years have gone by and so many emotions well up when I read what I confided in you at that time.

**26 February 1939**

It's my birthday, I'm finally 22! Everyone wished me happy birthday. You should know that I work at *Maison Septfonds*, the village café and so I know everyone. Some workers came to eat. They said they were constructing an internment camp for Spanish refugees. Our quiet little life will be turned upside down. It's cold at the moment, but tonight I'm going out! My friends asked me to go to a dance. All for now, see you soon.

**5 March 1939**

Some customers have told me that they’ve seen Spaniards, in poor condition, surrounded by many guards, that they’re tired and that some of these men are very young. Where are their wives and mothers? I wonder where they’re taking them because the camp is not ready yet.

That’s all people are talking about at the café. Some people are afraid of them, others support them. Our abbot goes to the camp and has told us that the living conditions are appalling. Personally, I don't know what to think. I feel sorry for them, that's all.

**11 April 1939**

It's been over a month since I've written to you! Today, Marguerite and I went for a bike ride, it was such a beautiful day! We met several refugees who are now working in the hospital or for the local bosses. Everyone is delighted!

**1st September 1939**

I don't have much time to write, but you should know that War has broken out. My brother and husband have been called up just like the others. I'm afraid.

**20 October 1939**

A lot has happened since I last wrote to you, our lives have changed so much...

Today, I met a very young man, skinny and poorly dressed. I offered him something to eat. His name is Angel and he is only 15 years old. I saw him staring at a spoon on the counter. So I gave it to him. He explained to me that for the people at the camp, this spoon is like the last symbol of their humanity.

**14 June 1940**

I forgot to tell you that I received a letter from my husband. He wrote to me that he is in a camp in northern Germany and that he is hungry and cold. I feel so far away from him. I hope he will come back soon.

Fortunately, at the end of the day, Angel came to see me. It upsets me that he was separated from his mother so young. Each time he comes, I learn a little more about his life. How stupid this war is that separates people who love each other. I gave him another spoon.

**3 August 1940**

My brother's home. He explained to me that an armistice had been signed. I haven't received another letter from my husband, I'm so worried.

Angel came to see me. He tried to comfort me. He's so sweet! I didn’t give him a spoon today because my boss is beginning to wonder where the spoons have gone.

**24 October 1940**

Maréchal Pétain was announcing that France will collaborate with the Germans. This caused such an uproar in the café that I thought for a moment Joseph and Marcel were going to hit each other!

**25 November 1940**

Yesterday, I read in the newspaper that there are laws against Jews, but it doesn't shock many people and, in the end, that's what shocks me. Those who whisper discretely do not seem ready to adapt to this new regime. You, my dear diary, are the only one I can tell about it.

**11 November 1942**

This morning, on the way to work, a child told me that he had seen German tanks and trucks in Caussade. When I got to the café, I opened a newspaper: this is the end of the "free zone". In the evening, I have to close early because of the curfew. The mayor constantly asks the villagers to cooperate. Some families have to take in German soldiers.

Angel comes less and less since he left the camp, but when he does, it makes me happy. He’s become a friend, like a little brother even though he looks more and more like a man now.

**21 December 1942**

Something has happened to me that I absolutely must tell you! Today, I refused to serve a German officer who came to recruit workers in the camp. The mayor asked me not to make a fuss. He’s got a lot of nerve! He's already forgotten what's happening to my husband right now... You know, I don't feel like doing much of anything right now.

**16 February 1943**

Marguerite came to the café today. She's sad. Her brother left to do compulsory labour service in Germany. After he left, the Militia came to see me. These guys, former classmates, know that I hear a lot of things and they question me. They scare me, but I haven't told them anything important.

**15 August 1944**

All that the newspapers and radios are talking about are the Allied landings in Provence and Normandy. I feel a sense of hope and joy in the village. We're finally going to be able to get rid of the Germans!

I heard that villagers have been arrested.

**8 May 1945**

I don't have time to write much, I have to go help at the café for tonight's party! We have to prepare flower arrangements to decorate the stage. It’s going to be a very special moment!

We are free! I'm sure my husband will be back soon!

**21 April 1946**

I have to give you some great news, dear diary, I'm pregnant! My husband returned in the summer of 1945. We can say that life has returned to normal. The village now has new inhabitants. Some refugees have settled here and started a family. I think I'll probably stop writing for quite some time.