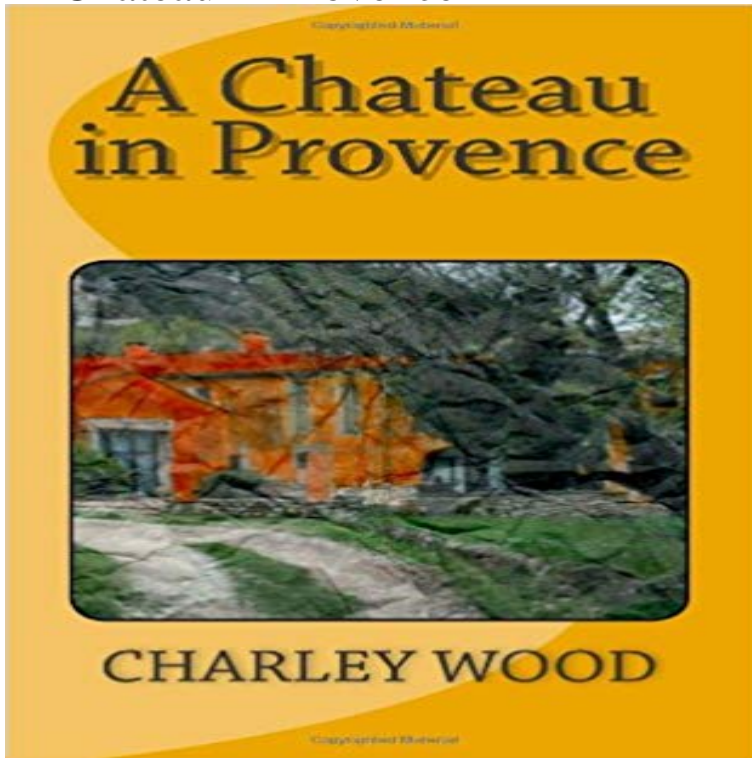


## A Chateau in Provence



Provence is a land of long cafe lunches and even longer cafe dinners. Lavender, olives, wines, medieval villages and ruined castles are normal, everyday features of the landscape. Its history is steeped with the myth and legend of painters, poets, and knights. Popes, emperors and a long cast of heroes and villains have called Provence home. Provence is the subject of hundreds of books and the beauty of its land has been the backdrop of countless movies. Its unhurried lifestyle and sublime climate are the envy of millions who are obliged to live in other less agreeable and less privileged places. An American family, the Bakers, came to see and enjoy this very special magic of Provence - and almost got away with it. As their vacation wound to an end, a simple mistake thrust them into the adventure of a lifetime when Sam Baker decided to celebrate the end of a long family hike with a cold beer at a local cafe. His innocent stop at the cafe quickly had Sam and his family entangled in the affairs of everyone from a likeable, small-time crook and ex-con, to a proud and much decorated policeman in the city of Aix-en-Provence, and ultimately to the government of La Republique Francaise itself. Louis Jaubert spent twelve long years in a Marseille prison for a crime he didn't commit. Now he's back home in Aix-en-Provence trying to make up for all those lost years. But this time, he's not exactly innocent. For months, he has carefully nurtured a plan that will make him rich beyond his imagination. Lately though, after a series of run-ins with the tough cop DesVaux in Aix and now a dumb mistake that involved the American Sam Baker, Louis is beginning to lose his nerve. Between the bungling American, who's always at the wrong place at the wrong time and the overzealous DesVaux, who dogs his every step, Louis' plan quickly unravels. Could it be possible, Louis wonders in a moment of desperation,

if these two nemeses could help him pull his plan back together.

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