

the chair occupied by Miss Julia Ogg, and in quite a comfortable spot when the winter should come on—protected from draughts, and in close proximity to the fire. The other place was at the end of the long table, at a corner where one would have to cramp one's knees to sit at all with any degree of comfort, and where only a small odd chair could be used.

Almost immediately after the boarders had assembled a man came quickly down the stairs, clad in evening dress. It happening that Fanny was close to the foot of the stairs, in an anxious endeavour to pass a certain dish to Joseph, who was waiting at table, the man stopped for a moment to encircle the girl's waist with his arm, to an accompaniment of giggles, and to the peril of the dish, before he passed on to the dining-room door. He was humming a little tune to himself as he opened the door, and went in, and took his place beside Miss Julia Ogg. Miss Meadows looked up for a moment, and then lowered her eyes again.

The new-comer was a tall, clean-shaven man, with dark hair that had a suggestion of curliness in it, and with very quick dark eyes. There was a certain largeness in his movements and a certain suggestion of exaggeration. He was the only man at that table in evening dress; but he dominated all at the table in other ways than by the difference of his attire. Miss Julia Ogg had looked up and smiled as he sat down beside her with a little whispered remark that was for her ear alone; Mrs. Ogg had turned her double chin in his direction, with the smiling expectancy of one who hoped to be entertained; Miss Meadows had raised her eyes again, and had watched him for a second or two before lowering them.