

the King in handing him the letter written with his own hand, had recommended the greatest possible celerity. Dubourget thinking that I was as light as himself, told me that with a good horse I could reach Versailles in an hour. I thanked him for his information, and added that I would remember it, if ever he was a Prince and I an equerry. A post-chaise carried me rapidly to court, and on entering my apartments, I learned that the King had already sent three times to learn if I had arrived. I hastened then to go to him, thinking that as there was so much haste, the affair must be important.

I found His Majesty with the Queen and Amelot, Minister of the King's Household. They all had a solemn and anxious air that alarmed me.

—Here you are at last ! said the King.

—We were expecting you with the greatest impatience, added the Queen.

—What is the subject in question ? I enquired with some emotion.

—An adventure which happened last night at the Opera, answered Louis XVI.

—Why did you not tell me that sooner ? said I gaily ; I had imagined something very unfortunate.

—The affair is more serious than you think it is, replied Maria-Antoinette. The Count d'Artois has been giddy enough to insult the Dutchess de Bourbon ; all the Condés' are furious, and we know not how to manage the affair.

—It is true continued the King, and we want your opinion and advice on the occasion.

—But I must first know the circumstances.

—Give an account of them, said the Queen to M. Amelot ; you know all, and disguise nothing.

The Minister not much pleased with the task assigned to him, fearing to be compromised in this affair by being called on as a witness, gave me a detail of the circumstances I am about to relate with the additions I have since learned.

Madame de Canillac, whom I have already mentioned,