

'Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.'" Jeanne was proud of her French, and this quotation brought her triumphantly to the first broad landing, which was decked with hot-house plants, and hung with frowning portraits of ducal ancestors.

"My frock is like a dream, but I cannot think it is me inside it. . . . Oh that I may not disgrace it by my behaviour . . . I cannot remember the names of any of the people I was introduced to, but Cousin Denis said I must not repeat people's names when I am talking to them, so perhaps they will not find out I have forgotten. . . . Jeanne Marie Charlotte de Courset, is this being worthy of your forefathers? . . . Would Anne Marie, Chanoinesse, Comtesse de l'insigne chapitre noble de Bourbourg, have gone to the guillotine shaking at the knees like this?" This outburst of noble indignation brought her to the foot of the grand staircase, where a liveried giant, in powder and knee-breeches, stood in the now deserted hall, and affably indicated the suite of ante-rooms which led to the saloon where the party was assembled.

"Worst come to the worst," thought Jeanne, in desperation. "I can but leave the house early to-morrow morning, before any one is up," and with this last consoling reflection she entered the drawing-room.

She looked so much younger than her actual age that her very apparent shyness was more becoming than awkward, and evoked fresh approval from the Duchess, who, as soon as she espied, through her glasses, the timid entry of Jeanne, made haste to introduce her son Dermot, who was to take his friend's sister in to dinner.

"I daresay I shall have Cousin Denis on the other side, and I must not forget that this is Louis' friend," thought Jeanne, faintly, as she took the tall young man's proffered arm.

But as she was the least important person in the room, she found herself almost at the other end of the long table, from the Duke; of whose fair head she caught only occasional