

# HER FIRST BIG CASE

## BY COLLETTE YVER

TRANSLATED BY ANDRÉ TRIDON  
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As she stepped out of the court room, her portfolio under her arm, a slender figure under the ample folds of her legal gown, she was approached by a well-dressed woman who had been waiting for her.

"Mlle. Marguerite Odelin?"

"Yes, that is my name."

"Could I have a few minutes talk with you, mademoiselle?"

The lawyer, a little tired and pale after her plea to the jury in behalf of a young girl charged with larceny, blushed a little.

"I am at your service; shall we talk here or go and sit down in the lobby?"

"I'd rather go to your home."

While exchanging these words the two women were eyeing each other with a certain curiosity. Mlle. Odelin was a graceful blonde of 23 with enough youthfulness and shyness to preserve, in spite of her intellectual strength and her decided air, a certain girlish charm.

The other woman seemed to be about 30. She looked extremely fashionable in her long coat of black broadcloth; in the shadow of her large hat and through her dark veil one could distinguish a passionate face and beautiful eyes ardent and tragic.

They kept walking for a few seconds along the roomy white vestibule, then suddenly both stopped. The windows opened on the apse of the Sainte Chapelle with its pure lines, its soaring buttresses, its daring pinnacles. The stranger, who seemed to be very greatly disturbed, fastened her glance on the lawyer and said:

"You have a great talent."

"Oh! Why?" the young woman murmured with the secret enjoyment of the modest in receiving a compliment.

"You certainly have. For several weeks I have attended court very frequently in order to hear some women lawyers arguing cases. It was by mere chance that I attended the trial at which you spoke. You did it with so much simplicity, you put so much heart into it, that I was deeply impressed."

"What did I say?" asked Mlle. Odelin with genuine surprise.

"Mademoiselle," the stranger said, "I am going to have a very important suit at court."

They were walking briskly now along the hall leading to the locker rooms. They met many lawyers on their way to the various courts; all of them greeted Mlle. Odelin courteously but with a certain absent-minded look, as though they affected to see only her pleasing face and to ignore the court gown she wore.

"I am going to sue for a divorce," the stranger continued in a decidedly rambling way. "I feel so abandoned, thrown upon myself as I am. A man lawyer could only give me cold legal advice. The sympathy you have inspired in me gave me the idea, I might say compelled me, to address myself to you; I have been for a week unable to make up my mind and to select an attorney from the list which has been presented to me."

"You are very kind," Mademoiselle Odelin answered, while changing her clothes in the locker room which she shared with two other young barristers. She then appeared in a very plain gown of blue serge, pinned a sailor hat on the heavy waves of her blond hair, drew on white woolen gloves and announced that she was ready to go.

"Where do you live?" asked the stranger, taking nervously the lawyer's arm, as though in her perturbed state of mind she felt fascinated by this intellectual young woman.

"Once more Marguerite Odelin blushed when answering:

"Rue Saint Jacques. You won't mind climbing five flights of stairs?"

"It was one of those winter days when Paris is all dry and bleak, when, seen from the tops of the buses, the people on the street give one the impression of swarming black ants, bustling about on the greasy asphalt. The two women walked silently along the Quai des Orfèvres, then crossed the Petit Pont and reached the Latin quarter. They were studying each other with the faint repugnance and the curiosity customary to women when they are thrown together unexpectedly.

She had a little flat opening on a backyard which good Mme. Odelin declared every time she came to see her daughter terribly plebeian. M. Odelin, however, had just been placed on the retired list and the student's monthly allowance was a heavy burden for her family, accustomed to the life of dignified and proud destitution which is the lot of the French functionary.

In her working girl's lodgings Marguerite lunched on a chop, dined on a soft boiled egg and studied law books in between. She never missed a course, worked like two and wore gowns she made herself evenings. In spite of this existence, which many a woman would have found unbearable, she kept up appearances so well that more than once some fellow student, some half starved Russian girl, convinced of her prosperity, came on the first of the month to borrow her rent money, a louis she had tried to lay aside, and which was never paid back.

At last she was admitted to the bar.

a long tremor, as though she were once more feeling the insult. The stranger removed her hand, her eyes shone, very deep, very dark, with a feverish fire.

"May I ask you to tell me your name?" the lawyer asked very softly.

"Oh, indeed! I don't know how to go about it. But you see, I had to make you understand how serious my case was, how unavoidable a rupture has become."

"My husband's name was Monsieur de Savy. We had been married five years. We loved each other so much. No words can express it. You will soon marry, maybe, Mlle. Odelin, and then you will realize what it means for a young woman to have a husband who is handsome, who is a superior man. No words can express that."

"You must know that our happiness was something unusual; we thought that life of ours was so unique, we were so proud of it, we looked down with pity on the love of other married couples; Monsieur de Savy was so infinitely clever, so refined intellectually. I was aware of my own worth, and I was glad he too was aware of it."

"I am very fond of intellectual things, I read a good deal, I am very much inter-

est in scientific progress and, without being pedantic, I could talk with my husband about everything. Nothing gave me more gratification than to hear him say to other men: 'My wife is wonderfully well informed, even if I knew it wasn't quite true.'

While talking Mme. de Savy gradually grew more composed. Mlle. Odelin watched her eagerly; it was impossible to remain indifferent before such a woman. It was impossible to see her without sympathizing with her, without admiring the unusual fascination which gripped her, without experiencing a sort of affection at first sight, however incongruous this combination of words may sound.

After a pause, she continued:

"To you who are such an expert in making a point, my story must sound silly and rambling. But I owe it to you to tell you the whole truth. You know how wonderful our love was. It was a joy for us to be together. We were quite sufficient to each other. The society of superior men, however, has always appealed to me."

"A friend of ours, whom I shall call the Baron, who is eighteen years older than I and whom I have known since I was a child, inspired in me, owing to his remarkable mind, a great admiration; I derived keen pleasure from his company. He also seemed to enjoy mine. He devoted himself entirely to scientific research. We used to have long talks."

"My husband became aware of this friendship and took offense at it. It offended him by hurting precisely that subtle pride which made him believe that he was my idol. He suffered in silence at first so that the Baron and I continued to see each other without any thought of harm. Monsieur de Savy usually took part in our conversations; and by and by he contented himself with being, so to speak, a mere spectator."

"Mme. de Savy's thoughts seemed to dwell for a short while on the memory of past incidents."

"Can it be," she continued, "that a deep friendship between a man and a woman always implies love? I don't believe it. At any rate I swear to you that neither in the Baron nor in myself was there ever the shadow of such a feeling. My husband, however, thought otherwise, but when he made a remark to me about it I treated the whole thing as a joke."

"We must cease to receive the Baron," he declared abruptly.

"I answered that such a thing was impossible."

"We must break with him, my married happiness is more important to me than

any considerations of friendship," she said.

"He felt, then, that he was arousing the self-conceit which he had cultivated in me, which he had flattered and worshipped. I felt indignant at being given orders in that tone. It was the first time I was ordered about and it really was too humiliating. What? A woman of my type, his equal in every respect, to have to submit like a little bourgeoisie to the iron rule of mademoiselle authority?"

"I know, mademoiselle, you may remark that such is the law. The law was made for the masses, not for people like ourselves. I do not hesitate to say that my husband and myself rank with the exceptional. Nothing was more painful to me than to see the unexpected lapse which placed my husband among the common-places."

"I shuddered when I heard him utter his commands. I loved him still; my affection for him would have made me accept that sacrifice if he only had asked for it instead of demanding it. Unfortunately his manly fierceness carried him away. I told him I refused to give up this perfectly honest and beautiful friendship."

"How long ago did this happen?" the lawyer asked.

"It was exactly one year ago. Monsieur de Savy carried out his threats. He managed to hurt our friend's feelings; they had an unpleasant discussion, after which the Baron couldn't very well call on me any more. I was apparently beaten; but only apparently. My hus-

band never appeared in a divorce case. He auster, middle class bringing up, based on some conventionalities, made her consider it a sort of sacrilege to employ her talent in breaking up a home. She felt a fleeting scruple which even long familiarity with the legal point of view would never succeed in stifling in her. She asked:

"Are you absolutely sure, Mme. de Savy, that you will never regret your decision?"

Mme. de Savy smiled.

"Regret it? Why should I regret it? I have no children and therefore my case is extremely simple. Everybody in my family has tried to effect a reconciliation. It has been a regular conspiracy. I have been bothered dreadfully. Now what I need is an ally who will actually side with me against that man. Tell me, will you take up my case?"

Mlle. Odelin hesitated no longer. She only asked for a little more information. Was the husband, for instance, likely to bring in the course of the trial any definite charge against her? The young woman protested. No, never, not even in his worst fits of temper, had M. de Savy expressed any suspicion. Her refusal to let her personality be merged with his had been the only cause of discord. After leaving her husband she had, however, out of an obscure sense of modesty or exaggerated scruples, always refused to receive the Baron.

It was agreed that Mlle. Odelin would the next day take possession of all the documents in the case. At the door the

two women kissed. They were friends. The young lawyer was now pervaded by a curious sense of importance. She had become the protecting angel of that weak and haughty woman. She was somebody.

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"Yes, that is luck; more luck than I deserve, you mean?"

"I mean nothing of the kind. You have an excellent mind and a good deal of perseverance. Everybody around the court house is following your career with much interest. Only you are so young and this is such a big case. To speak frankly, I consider this quite a windfall for myself, and still an old hand at it."

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Not that she ever lost courage; but she somehow settled down mentally and gave up much of her youthful optimism. No one took notice of her. She herself realized clearly her own unimportance; she entertained but slim hopes of success. The biggest case she had tried thus far was her janitor's and she had received a fifty franc note for it.

Once upon a time, all enraptured with this wonderful legal profession, she had scorned the thought of teaching; she now looked eagerly for pupils and managed to give lessons in law to a few society girls. It enabled her to shift along without the family allowance, and this really gave her the first joy she had derived from her career. At times, when trying in court the case of some wayward girl, her heart, hungering for tenderness, would jump kissing the unworthy young wretch.

And now, just think! a woman whose appearance suggested all the luxuries Parisian life offers, had climbed five flights of stairs to seek the help of her talent.

Mlle. Odelin had invited the stranger to sit in the bamboo armchair with the frail grasshopper legs; the stranger lifted her veil, smiled, a little self-conscious, then encouraged by the kind expression in the young woman's eyes began:

"Yes, I am going to sue for a divorce. Let me tell you my story. It is very strange. Once I couldn't even imagine what it meant to be unhappy. Oh, my God! I know now what it means. The worst, the worst thing of all has happened to me."

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On her way to the little flat she was now in the habit of stopping before some gorgeous show windows and of selecting mentally certain pieces of furniture which would figure in her future household. In her night dreams she received clients in a Louis XVI. office which was a marvel of good taste.

One evening in March as she was poring over her Dalloz looking up precedents in divorce cases the bell rang. She hastened to scratch a match and to relight the gas in the little hall which she usually turned off for economy's sake. A second ring of the bell. Could it be a client, so late at night? Her heart began thumping. She opened the door.

A man of distinctly refined appearance asked for Mlle. Odelin.

"That is my name, Monsieur."

She led him to the little reception room with the bamboo furniture where on the well worn mat between the lamp and the fire the lazy cat was stretching herself. Marguerite had a premonition of luck and felt all elated. She tried very hard to assume the expression of gravity that befits old jurists, but her joy was so keen that she smiled broadly while offering to her visitor the armchair with the grasshopper legs. Then she sat down at her narrow desk, her elbows on the green baize, and waited in a dignified attitude.

For one or two seconds the stranger remained silent as if he were surprised at finding himself face to face with this young woman.

He was about 35 years old; he had a high forehead, restless eyes, deep and ardent. Although evidently a man of the world he betrayed a certain embarrassment.

"Mlle. Odelin," he finally said, with a low voice, "I am M. de Savy."

Mlle. Odelin didn't answer at once, but shrank back a little and let her arms drop along the folds of her skirt. He went on:

"It may be that I am not doing the proper thing in calling on you. Once I might have criticised severely any one taking such a step. You have been retained, Mademoiselle, by Mme. de Savy, who is still and whom I still insist on calling my wife. In legal parlance I am designated rather pitilessly as the defendant."

"I should not have come perhaps. A man lawyer might, in deference to certain legal ethics, have shut the door in my face. But I must speak to you, Mlle. Odelin; I must have a talk with your wife's attorney. Still I do not want to take advantage of your surprise or of your kindness. Do you wish me to leave this room without saying another word?"

Mlle. Odelin found herself in a painful predicament. The figure of her client, now her very dear friend, outlined itself before her. It was this man who had abused her, reviled her, insisted upon her the tangible insult of a blow, brutally, shamefully. All her resentment flamed up. She answered very coldly:

"Will you kindly tell me what the object of your visit is? I will be able to tell you then whether from a legal point of view it is proper for me to receive you."

"Mademoiselle," M. de Savy exclaimed, "never mind about legal ethics; it is to the woman in you that I address myself. Do not lend your assistance to my wife in securing a divorce. You are holding in your hands our marriage ties, which just at present are very weak, very loose; do not sever them. I cannot admit that a Judge could separate us from each other."

He was visibly exhausted. He continued with an effort:

"I still love my wife."

"If such are your feelings toward Mme. de Savy," Marguerite remarked severely, "how could you treat her so brutally? How can you expect her to forget certain facts which you do not seem to remember?"

He remained silent. Marguerite after a few seconds insisted:

"Life in common, my dear sir, is no longer possible for you and my client. Is the happiness for which you still seem to be hoping compatible with the remembrance of certain scenes of certain acts?"

She was growing very bold, sitting in judgment over him enjoying the discomfort of this tyrant who had so long taken advantage of his own strength. He didn't offer any answer.

Mlle. Odelin stopped and looked at him; two tears were stealthily rolling down his cheeks and his glance, resting on the lawyer's face, expressed so much anguish and sorrow that the young woman relented. Finally he spoke:

"I have nothing to say. The things you are recalling to me are too painful to be forgotten for one instant. Oh! I haven't humiliated any one but myself; may I ever realize that. My brutality could never lessen the nobility of her character, whereas I feel now as though I had lost whatever manliness I ever had."

"I am a very wretched man, Mademoiselle, and I shouldn't presume, realizing my sins as I do, to try and escape their consequences. What I have had to endure, however, is beyond my strength. I am no longer worthy of my wife but I cannot live without her."

He stared vacantly for a little while and the shadow of a painful remembrance seemed to darken his expression.

"There is in a man's blood a fire of violence which will burn more or less brightly. Never have I misunderstood my wife's feelings. Never have I ceased to admire her as a most accomplished woman lifted far above the danger of common temptations."

"Why, then, you might ask me, should I have taken offence at the attentions of a man who deserved my perfect esteem? Because, Mademoiselle, our marriage bonds were not merely the customary human bonds, but the more mysterious bonds of the intellect."

"Our minds were enamored of each other. I loved my wife's beautiful and pure mind and my mind was consciously striving to please hers. I kindled a fire under the beautiful brow and I fed it with my own fuel. I could vow that whatever idea she expressed she had originally received it from me though unconsciously. I could not tell you what pride I felt over such a relationship. The influence I exerted over her exalted me by adding to my worth the worth of such a wife."

"One day I noticed in her, so to speak, a strange imprint. Another mind which was in every respect superior to mine was fascinating her. Our conversations used to cover a very wide range, in fact we were interested in almost every vital thing of the day; now my wife's mind seems to apply itself to scientific questions exclusively."

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A man of distinctly refined appearance asked for Mlle. Odelin.

"That is my name, Monsieur."

She led him to the little reception room with the bamboo furniture where on the well worn mat between the lamp and the fire the lazy cat was stretching herself. Marguerite had a premonition of luck and felt all elated. She tried very hard to assume the expression of gravity that befits old jurists, but her joy was so keen that she smiled broadly while offering to her visitor the armchair with the grasshopper legs. Then she sat down at her narrow desk, her elbows on the green baize, and waited in a dignified attitude.

For one or two seconds the stranger remained silent as if he were surprised at finding himself face to face with this young woman.

He was about 35 years old; he had a high forehead, restless eyes, deep and ardent. Although evidently a man of the world he betrayed a certain embarrassment.

"Mlle. Odelin," he finally said, with a low voice, "I am M. de Savy."

Mlle. Odelin didn't answer at once, but shrank back a little and let her arms drop along the folds of her skirt. He went on:

"It may be that I am not doing the proper thing in calling on you. Once I might have criticised severely any one taking such a step. You have been retained, Mademoiselle, by Mme. de Savy, who is still and whom I still insist on calling my wife. In legal parlance I am designated rather pitilessly as the defendant."

"I should not have come perhaps. A man lawyer might, in deference to certain legal ethics, have shut the door in my face. But I must speak to you, Mlle. Odelin; I must have a talk with your wife's attorney. Still I do not want to take advantage of your surprise or of your kindness. Do you wish me to leave this room without saying another word?"

Mlle. Odelin found herself in a painful predicament. The figure of her client, now her very dear friend, outlined itself before her. It was this man who had abused her, reviled her, insisted upon her the tangible insult of a blow, brutally, shamefully. All her resentment flamed up. She answered very coldly:

"Will you kindly tell me what the object of your visit is? I will be able to tell you then whether from a legal point of view it is proper for me to receive you."

"Mademoiselle," M. de Savy exclaimed, "never mind about legal ethics; it is to the woman in you that I address myself. Do not lend your assistance to my wife in securing a divorce. You are holding in your hands our marriage ties, which just at present are very weak, very loose; do not sever them. I cannot admit that a Judge could separate us from each other."

He was visibly exhausted. He continued with an effort:

"I still love my wife."

"If such are your feelings toward Mme. de Savy," Marguerite remarked severely, "how could you treat her so brutally? How can you expect her to forget certain facts which you do not seem to remember?"

He remained silent. Marguerite after a few seconds insisted:

"Life in common, my dear sir, is no longer possible for you and my client. Is the happiness for which you still seem to be hoping compatible with the remembrance of certain scenes of certain acts?"

She was growing very bold, sitting in judgment over him enjoying the discomfort of this tyrant who had so long taken advantage of his own strength. He didn't offer any answer.

Mlle. Odelin stopped and looked at him; two tears were stealthily rolling down his cheeks and his glance, resting on the lawyer's face, expressed so much anguish and sorrow that the young woman relented. Finally he spoke:

"I have nothing to say. The things you are recalling to me are too painful to be forgotten for one instant. Oh! I haven't humiliated any one but myself; may I ever realize that. My brutality could never lessen the nobility of her character, whereas I feel now as though I had lost whatever manliness I ever had."

"I am a very wretched man, Mademoiselle, and I shouldn't presume, realizing my sins as I do, to try and escape their consequences. What I have had to endure, however, is beyond my strength. I am no longer worthy of my wife but I cannot live without her."

He stared vacantly for a little while and the shadow of a painful remembrance seemed to darken his expression.

"There is in a man's blood a fire of violence which will burn more or less brightly. Never have I misunderstood my wife's feelings. Never have I ceased to admire her as a most accomplished woman lifted far above the danger of common temptations."

"Why, then, you might ask me, should I have taken offence at the attentions of a man who deserved my perfect esteem? Because, Mademoiselle, our marriage bonds were not merely the customary human bonds, but the more mysterious bonds of the intellect."

"Our minds were enamored of each other. I loved my wife's beautiful and pure mind and my mind was consciously striving to please hers. I kindled a fire under the beautiful brow and I fed it with my own fuel. I could vow that whatever idea she expressed she had originally received it from me though unconsciously. I could not tell you what pride I felt over such a relationship. The influence I exerted over her exalted me by adding to my worth the worth of such a wife."

"One day I noticed in her, so to speak, a strange imprint. Another mind which was in every respect superior to mine was fascinating her. Our conversations used to cover a very wide range, in fact we were interested in almost every vital thing of the day; now my wife's mind seems to apply itself to scientific questions exclusively."

"That mind, as soft as wax, was yielding to another influence, to the pressure of

It was a great occasion; papa and mamma were in attendance. When they saw their daughter draped in her impressive legal gown, with a becoming lawyer's cap on her blond braids, they shed a fitting number of tears and thought to themselves:

Her sister, who just then was deriving a little competence from her humble pedagogical efforts, displayed the tender solidarity characteristic of large families which wealth hasn't spoiled. She rented and furnished for her the little flat in the Rue St. Jacques. In this ridiculous office with its silly bamboo furniture Marguerite came to know every one of life's hardships.

Not that she ever lost courage; but she somehow settled down mentally and gave up much of her youthful optimism. No one took notice of her. She herself realized clearly her own unimportance; she entertained but slim hopes of success. The biggest case she had tried thus far was her janitor's and she had received a fifty franc note for it.

Once upon a time, all enraptured with this wonderful legal profession, she had scorned the thought of teaching; she now looked eagerly for pupils and managed to give lessons in law to a few society girls. It enabled her to shift along without the family allowance, and this really gave her the first joy she had derived from her career. At times, when trying in court the case of some wayward girl, her heart, hungering for tenderness, would jump kissing the unworthy young wretch.

And now, just think! a woman whose appearance suggested all the luxuries Parisian life offers, had climbed five flights of stairs to seek the help of her talent.

Mlle. Odelin had invited the stranger to sit in the bamboo armchair with the frail grasshopper legs; the stranger lifted her veil, smiled, a little self-conscious, then encouraged by the kind expression in the young woman's eyes began:

"Yes, I am going to sue for a divorce. Let me tell you my story. It is very strange. Once I couldn't even imagine what it meant to be unhappy. Oh, my God! I know now what it means. The worst, the worst thing of all has happened to me."

She covered her eyes with her slender, ungloved hands.

"A woman like me," she murmured incoherently, "I have been ill treated—brutally treated. He raised his hand against me."

Marguerite, who was watching her coolly although she was beginning to take an ardent interest in the narrative, saw the handsome woman's body shaken by

two women kissed. They were friends. The young lawyer was now pervaded by a curious sense of importance. She had become the protecting angel of that weak and haughty woman. She was somebody.

"By Jove! Mlle. Odelin!" exclaimed Lachelier, the husband's attorney, when they met three days later in the law gallery to exchange some documents. "You don't do things half way. Such a divorce case for a start! Do you know that is luck?"

Marguerite's eyes sparkled with joy. She made no effort to conceal her deep gratification. She answered maliciously:

"Yes, that is luck; more luck than I deserve, you mean?"

"I mean nothing of the kind. You have an excellent mind and a good deal of perseverance. Everybody around the court house is following your career with much interest. Only you are so young and this is such a big case. To speak frankly, I consider this quite a windfall for myself, and still an old hand at it."

"Oh! Wait until they make a Judge out of you; then you can call yourself an old hand."

Indeed he wasn't such an old hand; he wasn't quite 40, but he had had a great many cases, and the legal business of several industrial firms brought him quite an income. Handsome and athletic, sure of himself, he felt a little worried over that slender young woman who was to argue with him in court; in obedience to the unwritten law of the bar he had always affected to ignore women lawyers. The courageous fight this girl had waged, the many disappointments she had borne proudly, were no secret to him. Mlle. Odelin was so generally respected and esteemed that he secretly rejoiced over her piece of good luck.

"We'll have to put a lot of work into this case," he said with a slightly patronizing touch.

"Yes, I will have to," she answered cheerfully, too clever not to take the hint; "were it only to be worthy of my opponent."

They had seated themselves on a bench in the hall facing the locker room whose door was continually opened and shut by numberless lawyers.

Lachelier glanced at Marguerite; he found her charming with her clever smile, the graceful oval of her face, her witty eyes.

"I am very proud of having you as my opponent," he added quickly.

She didn't seem to attach much importance to this statement, and she took out of the portfolio he proffered to her a bundle of letters which she glanced over. They were letters from Mme. de Savy to

her husband. Now and then she spoke a word, made a remark, and the word was so fitting, the remark so original, that Lachelier finally wondered whether it wasn't going to be interesting after all to argue a case in court with this little colleague of his.

After finding out what she wanted to know, she promptly rose, shook hands with him and disappeared in the locker room.

What a delight it would be to work under such conditions! To work gloriously on a splendid case, to see all her dreams coming to realization; she had never expected such luck. She was simply carried away by her work. She was blissfully outlining the main theme of her address to the jury.

Her nights were often sleepless but full of inspiration. It was a happiness such as she never had experienced before. And she enjoyed it all very naively. She announced it to the dear ones in a child-like letter: "Dear parents: I am simply going to become famous."

And after Mme. Rosalie had left, when she found herself alone in her four rooms, without anybody to congratulate her to her heart's desire, she caught in her arms her gray cat, a nice animal with velvety paws, she hugged her to her breast with a child's playful glee, and she whispered into the fuzzy ear:

"You know, kitten, success has come. We are going to be very rich, Pussycat; I have arrived."

To go down to the court house now was

certain women would like to consult her, to entrust her with their interests, only such a step must have seemed to them a little premature. They wished first to see her at work. They were waiting for her to step up to the bar.

On her way to the little flat she was now in the habit of stopping before some gorgeous show windows and of selecting mentally certain pieces of furniture which would figure in her future household. In her night dreams she received clients in a Louis XVI. office which was a marvel of good taste.

One evening in March as she was por