

through into a room at the end of the small hallway. Three men rose from seats by the fire as he did so, and one said: "Hullo! who're you?" Another added: "It's Pretty Pierre."

Pierre looked at the table laid for breakfast, and said: "Where is Lydia Throng?"

The elder of the three brothers replied: "There's no Lydia *Throng* here. There's Lydia Bontoff, though, and in another week she'll be Lydia something else."

"What does she say about it herself?"

"You've no call to know."

"You stole her, forced her from Throng's—her father's house."

"She was n't Throng's; she was a Bontoff—sister of us."

"Well, she says *Throng*, and *Throng* it's got to be."

"What have you got to say about it?"

At that moment Lydia appeared at the door leading from the kitchen.

"Whatever *she* has to say," answered Pierre.

"Who're you talking for?"

"For her, for Throng, for the law."

"The law—by gosh, that's good! You, you darned gambler; you scum!" said Caleb, the brother who knew him.

Pierre showed all the intelligent, resolute