

your intention of asking for an interview with Miss Jane West?"

Pierre, half-blind with humiliation, turned without a word and made his way to the door. He meant to go away and kill himself. The purpose was like iron in his mind. That he should have to stand and, because of his own cowardly fault, to endure insult from this contemptuous stranger, made of life a garment too stained, too shameful to be worn. He was in haste to be rid of it. Something, however, barred his exit. He stumbled back to avoid it. There, holding aside the curtain in the doorway, stood Joan.

This time there was no possible doubt of her identity. She was wrapped in a long, blue gown, her hair had fallen in braided loops on either side of her face and neck. The unchanged eyes of Joan under her broad brows looked up at him. She was thin and wan, unbelievably broken and tired and hurt, but she was Joan. Pierre could not but forget death at sight of her. He staggered forward, and she, putting up her arms, drew him hungrily and let fall her head upon his shoulder.

"My gel! My Joan!" Pierre sobbed.

Prosper's voice sawed into their tremulous silence.

"So, after all, the branding iron is the proper