

do not think them sincere. Honestly, then, I often made pictures of our meeting in my mind — while we marched, and when I lay in my blankets at night; and ever since I parted with Hewett at the crossroads I've been thinking how fine it would be to — to — ”

“To what?” she asked.

“To kiss you again,” he said.

“Oh!” exclaimed the girl softly, her eyes intent on his beaded meccasins.

“I really thought I was going to do it. My mind was set on it,” he ventured.

“And you didn't, after all.”

“I don't kiss by force,” he said, smiling forlornly.

“Frank,” she said in a changed voice, “you must realize now that we are no longer children.”

“Children!” he cried in mild indignation. “Children! Who says we are children? True, you are only eighteen — but I am twenty-two. Children don't command companies of riflemen campaigning in the wilderness.” He laughed boyishly at his own big talk.

“But, in all seriousness,” he added, “why have I not as much right to kiss you, now that I am a man, as I had when I was an unappreciative child?”

“But you know that you have not,” she replied quietly.

A change came to Francis Drurie's tanned face.