

"Did you kill him?"

"Of whom is mademoiselle speaking?"

"Pray do not pretend to be stupid, monsieur. I am speaking of that other man—the owner of this tunic—the sergent who took you into the forest. Dill you kill him?"

"He died in fair fight, mademoiselle."

"It was a duel, then?" He did not answer, and she continued, "I can trust your face, monsieur. I am sure it was only in fair fight. But why should you think me afraid to touch *this*? Oh, why, M. à Clive, will men always take it so cruelly for granted that we are afraid of the thought of blood—nay, even that we owe it to ourselves to be afraid? If we are what you all insist we should be, what right have we to be born in these times? Think of New France fighting now for dear life—ah, why should I ask *you* to think, who have bled for her? Yet you would have me shudder at the touch of a stained piece of cloth; and while you hold these foolish prejudices, can you wonder that New France has no Jeanne d'Arc? When I was at the Ursulines at Quebec, they used to pray to her and ask for her intercession; but what they taught was needlework."

"The world has altered since her time, mademoiselle," said John, falsely and lamely.

"Has it? It burnt her; even in those days it did its best according to its lights," she answered bitterly. "Only in these days there are no heroines to burn. No heroines . . . no fires . . . and even in our needlework we must be demure, and not touch a garment that has been touched with blood! Monsieur, was this man a coward?" She lifted the tunic.

"He was a vain fellow and a bully, mademoiselle, but by no means a coward."

"He fought for France?"

"Yes; and, I believe, with credit."

"Then, Monsieur, because he was a bully, I commend the