

## VERSION ANGLAISE ET COURT THÈME

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### I. VERSION

The route taken by Hawk-eye lay across those sandy plains, relieved by occasional valleys and swells of land, which had been traversed by their party on the morning of the same day, with the baffled Magua for their guide. The sun had now fallen low towards the distant mountains; and as their journey lay through the interminable forest, the heat was no longer oppressive. Their progress, in consequence, was proportionate; and long before the twilight gathered about them, they had made good many toilsome miles on their return.

The hunter, like the savage whose place he filled, seemed to select among the blind signs of their wild route, with a species of instinct, seldom abating his speed, and never pausing to deliberate. A rapid and oblique glance at the moss on the trees, with an occasional upward gaze towards the setting sun, or a steady but passing look at the direction of the numerous watercourses, through which he waded, were sufficient to determine his path, and remove his greatest difficulties. In the meantime, the forest began to change its hues, losing that lively green which had embellished its arches, in the graver light which is the usual precursor of the close of the day.

While the eyes of the sisters were endeavouring to catch glimpses through the trees, of the flood of golden glory which formed a glittering halo around the sun, tingeing here and there with ruby streaks, or bordering with narrow edgings of shining yellow, a mass of clouds that lay piled at no great distance above the western hills, Hawk-eye turned suddenly, and, pointing upwards towards the gorgeous heavens, he spoke—

“Yonder is the signal given to man to seek his food and natural rest,” he said; “better and wiser would it be, if he could understand the signs of nature, and take a lesson from the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the fields! Our night, however, will soon be over; for, with the moon, we must be up and moving again. I remember to have fought the Maquas, hereaways, in the first war in which I ever drew blood from man; and we threw up a work of blocks, to keep the ravenous varmints from handling our scalps. If my marks do not fail me, we shall find the place a few rods further to our left.”

Without waiting for an assent, or, indeed, for any reply, the sturdy hunter moved boldly into a dense thicket of young chestnuts, shoving aside the branches of the exuberant shoots which nearly covered the ground, like a man who expected, at each step, to discover some object he had formerly known. The recollection of the scout did not deceive him. After

penetrating through the brush, matted as it was with briars, for a few hundred feet, he entered an open space, that surrounded a low, green hillock, which was crowned by the decaying blockhouse in question.

James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, 1826.

## II. THÈME

Michel Strogoff, Nadia et Nicolas n'eurent pas à chercher longtemps pour trouver un lieu de repos. La première maison dont ils poussèrent la porte était vide, aussi bien que toutes les autres. Il ne s'y trouvait que quelques bottes de feuillage. Faute de mieux, le cheval dut se contenter de cette maigre nourriture. Quant aux provisions de la kibitka<sup>1</sup>, elles n'étaient pas épuisées, et chacun en prit sa part. Puis, après s'être agenouillés devant une modeste image de la Panaghia, suspendue à la muraille, et que la dernière flamme d'une lampe éclairait encore, Nicolas et la jeune fille s'endormirent, tandis que veillait Michel Strogoff, sur qui le sommeil ne pouvait avoir prise.

Le lendemain, 26 août, avant l'aube, la kibitka, réattelée, traversait le parc de bouleaux pour atteindre la berge de l'Yeniseï.

Michel Strogoff était vivement préoccupé. Comment ferait-il pour traverser le fleuve, si, ce qui était probable, toute barque ou bac avaient été détruits afin de retarder la marche des Tartares ?

Jules Verne, *Michel Strogoff*, 1876.

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<sup>1</sup> Kibitka : charrette à cheval.