

Danger in the Forest

It was still daytime when Major Heyward, Alice, Cora and Magua left Fort Edward, but the sky was grey. When they entered the thick forest, it was so dark that it seemed like night. Heyward and the women rode horses while Magua walked. The forest was filled with terrible animal cries and it was getting darker. Magua heard something in the bushes. He stopped the horses and took out his knife. He pulled back the leaves of a tree and there they saw David Gamut, the foolish church singer who always sang on Sundays at Fort Edward.

“David! What are you doing here?”

Major Heyward was glad Gamut was not an enemy.

“I came here to sing. Nature is the perfect place to hear music. But I’m afraid my horse doesn’t agree with me.”

Gamut was a tall, thin man who was sitting on a white horse wearing a funny green hat. He played a small handmade pipe.

“Well, you can’t stay out here. Our troops are going to Fort Henry. We’re going there, too. Why don’t you come with us?”

“I’d be delighted. How about a song?”

Magua said something under his breath.

“Not just now, David!”

So, the small party was now made up of five and they continued on their way through the thick forest.

They didn’t know where they were. Magua decided to have a look around.

“You stay here. I go to mountain, look, see where we go.”

Heyward and the others stayed behind.

"Mm? Now? How about a song?"

Gamut played his pipe. Major Heyward thought he heard a sound.

"Gamut, stop it."

Two Indians and a white man dressed in animal skins came out from behind the trees. One of the Indians wasn't wearing many clothes and he had war paint all over his body. The other two wore animal-fur hats and deer-skin jackets. The white man held a rifle.

"Who are you?"

"I'm Major Duncan Heyward of the King's 60th regiment at Fort William Henry."

The white man smiled at the way Heyward spoke.

"And who brought you here?"

Heyward looked annoyed.

"I'm afraid our Indian doesn't know this forest."

"Did you say Indian?"

"Yes, he's a Huron and he's around here somewhere."

The white man said something to his Indian friends and they disappeared into the forest.

"I'm sorry, but you'll have to wait here. I want to see this Indian of yours."

People didn't usually trust Indians who helped the white soldiers. Heyward, Gamut, Alice and Cora waited as the white man with the rifle disappeared into the trees behind them. Suddenly, they heard a loud Indian scream, then a gunshot.

