



THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS: PART I

CAST

HEYWARD	<i>Young Major</i>
CORA	<i>Young Woman</i>
ALICE	<i>Young Woman</i>
MAGUA	<i>Indian Runner</i>
GAMUT	<i>Singing Master</i>
HAWKEYE	<i>Woodsman</i>
CHINGACHGOOK	<i>Mohican Warrior</i>
UNCAS	<i>Mohican Warrior</i>

NARRATOR: For three bloody years the colonies of France and Great Britain had warred for control of North America. This conflict, fought in such an unknown and untamed wilderness, presented the opposing armies with a peculiar obstacle. Before they could engage one another in battle, the armies first had to face the land itself—conquering the forest, the rapid rivers, and the mountain passes.

In the lush forests of upper New York stood one of the many forts that had been erected in the wilderness. This fort, the British Fort Edward, was alive with activity like a hive of bees. (*murmuring of the troops*) A report had come that French forces were marching toward them with an army of soldiers as numerous as the leaves on the trees.

As the sounds of drums and marching feet filled the air, 1,500 soldiers marched out of the fort onto the road bound for Fort William Henry. (*sounds of an army marching*) Many an axe had been blunted making a wide enough thoroughfare for armed troops through the dense trees. The stately British officers marched proudly in their fine, bright red coats while the colonial militiamen took the humbler position to their side.

As the road led the troops onward, the numberless pines rose like dark lines on either side and seemed to devour them—slowly snuffing out their triumphant notes. Then nothing but silence was heard.

After the troops had departed, a lone officer accompanied by two, finely-dressed ladies rode out of the fort. They were a pair of well-to-do sisters, one dark-haired and one light.

ALICE: Oh, Duncan! This is all so exciting!

NARRATOR: The young officer scowled.

HEYWARD: (*angrily*) Exciting? Hardly! I still cannot believe you two left the safety of the city to travel here! We are in the middle of a war! It is too dangerous! As the daughters of a colonel, I thought you would understand that.

NARRATOR: Cora, the elder, dark-haired sister, smiled at his rebuke.

CORA: Major Heyward, some things never change. We have known you ever since we were children, and you are still treating us like your little sisters.

HEYWARD: Someone has to watch out for you! When Colonel Munro finds out that his daughters are in such danger—

CORA: He will thank you for keeping us safe.

HEYWARD: Ha! There's no time to take you back home, or I would. The French will be attacking your father's fort any day! You have placed me in a horrible situation! My only goal is to take you safely on to your father, so he can scold you himself!

ALICE: Oh please, Duncan. Don't be cross with us! You look so handsome in your fine, red uniform.

NARRATOR: Major Heyward almost blushed at the young lady's compliment.

HEYWARD: Well, I...(cough) Thank you! But that is beside the point!

CORA: Like I told you before, Duncan, we are well aware of the risks. But war or no war, Alice and I will be where our father is—and nowhere else.

NARRATOR: For the first time the young major allowed his frown to retreat slightly.

HEYWARD: (sigh) If our troops were as brave as you two, we would have won this war months ago. Now where is that blasted

guide of ours? I told him to meet us here after the troops had departed.

ALICE: (shocked) He's not a savage, is he? They frighten me so!

HEYWARD: Yes, he is an Indian runner. Like the French, we, too, have used the Indians for our advantage. They know the land better than anyone, and the general swears this one can be trusted...if he ever arrives.

NARRATOR: Alice shuddered.

ALICE: I saw one of those painted demons earlier. He was so hideous...and dark.

NARRATOR: Cora flushed indignantly, and as she did, it accentuating the deeper tint of her complexion.

CORA: Alice! Should we not trust a man because of the hue of his skin?

ALICE: Well, I...

CORA: Our goal is to reach Father, and if an Indian guide can aid us in that, we should be willing to accept his help.

ALICE: (bursting into tears) I am just so worried about Father!

NARRATOR: Major Heyward moved near the distressed girl—starting to reach his arm around her—but then awkwardly restrained himself.

HEYWARD: Don't shed another tear, Alice. I shall get you to your father soon. Your face is too fair for tears.

NARRATOR: Major Heyward cast a longing look upon Alice.

ALICE: (*cry of fright*) Ah!

NARRATOR: A shadow had appeared next to them—Magua the Indian runner. His face was frozen in a stoic expression. His war paint blended in dark confusion upon his face, and his eye glittered like a fiery star.

HEYWARD: Magua! There you are! We are ready to depart.

MAGUA: Then Magua will lead you.

NARRATOR: As he bowed mechanically and passed on, Alice shuddered again.

ALICE: The dark men look so ghastly! Why do they shave their heads and leave only that scrap of hair on top?

HEYWARD: You are too tender and delicate to know such things!

CORA: Please don't coddle us, Duncan. (*to Alice*) Alice, it is quite simple. If the Indian warrior is beaten in battle, that tuft of hair is a courtesy to his enemy. A handhold.

ALICE: A handhold for what?

CORA: Removing the scalp.

ALICE: (*crying out*) Oh my! I feel so faint!

NARRATOR: Magua motioned for the mounted major and the two ladies to follow him up the main road. Soon he slipped through the brush to a hidden path—one so

narrow that only one person could walk along it at a time.

ALICE: (*whimpering*) Oh my. Remember how the forest seemed to gobble up those soldiers when they left? I fear it will do the same to us.

CORA: Nonsense. Soon we will be with Father, and all will be well.

NARRATOR: As they headed deeper in the woods, Major Heyward watched their native guide suspiciously.

HEYWARD: Magua, are you sure this path will take us the fort more quickly than the main road?

MAGUA: Magua knows the way.

HEYWARD: Magua—what does that name mean anyway? What tribe of Indian are you? You have the markings of a Mohawk.

MAGUA: Magua was born a Huron, but he was adopted by the Mohawk tribe. Magua means "subtle fox."

HEYWARD: The Subtle Fox? An odd nickname.

MAGUA: It is because Magua can run all night through the darkness. He is stealthy.

HEYWARD: I should warn you, these young ladies are precious cargo. They are the daughters of Colonel Munro. Do you know him?

NARRATOR: Magua turned and eyed Major Heyward with an almost-smiling glance.

MAGUA: I do. He is one of Magua's British fathers. I serve them all. I am faithful. (*pause*) Hssht!

HEYWARD: What is the matter?

NARRATOR: Magua's back had become very rigid, and he drew his tomahawk from his belt. As the other travelers pricked their ears, they heard the sound of a rider approaching through the underbrush.

HEYWARD: Ladies, hide yourselves! Someone approaches!

NARRATOR: Emerging from the woods came an odd-looking man riding on a mare with a colt trailing behind. He had a slender, insect-like body and a three-cornered hat upon his head.

GAMUT: (*loudly*) Helloooo there!

HEYWARD: Who the devil are you?

GAMUT: (*offended*) I beg your pardon! Who the devil indeed! I am David Gamut.

HEYWARD: Are you a clergyman?

GAMUT: Well, yes of sorts. I am a psalmist—a singer of psalms. I was planning to travel with the troops, but I must have missed them. Then I spied your party.

HEYWARD: (*sternly*) Sir, we are not out for a lark! I am escorting these young ladies safely to their father at Fort William Henry.

GAMUT: Oh, yes! How rude of me! Good morning, ladies!

NARRATOR: As the odd man tipped his hat to the two sisters, the sight of him bobbing up and down in his saddle like a cork caused Alice to giggle. (*giggling*)

CORA: The wilderness is an odd place to find a singing master.

GAMUT: Right you are! But I thought perhaps the soldiers would need a way to remember their devotion to God. So I set out from Boston—

HEYWARD: Sir! We have no room for—

ALICE: Oh, Duncan, please! Let him come with us! It will break up the boredom. Maybe he could sing for us!

NARRATOR: The young officer scowled at the singing master.

HEYWARD: Very well. For you, Alice. But, Master Gamut, I must warn you, there are many dangers about.

GAMUT: Of course. Of course. We are in the devil's abode here. And it looks like you have one of the devil's own leading you.

NARRATOR: He motioned to Magua, who turned with a huff and continued on down the path.

CORA: Good sir, do not insult him! He is our guide!

GAMUT: You allow a son of darkness to lead you? God forbid!

ALICE: That is exactly what *I* said.

HEYWARD: Do not insult him. We are completely at his mercy.

GAMUT: Mercy! Ah, that reminds me of the most beautiful psalm. Ladies, would you care for a song?

CORA: Perhaps silence would be best.

ALICE: (*excitedly*) I would be delighted to hear a psalm! What joy!

NARRATOR: This pleased the singing master, and he drew out a small book from his knapsack, placed a pair of spectacles upon his nose, and sounded a note upon a metallic pitch pipe. (*musical note*)

GAMUT: Ahem! (*singing*) Bow down your ear, O Lord!

HEYWARD: (*grumbling*) Perfect.

NARRATOR: As Gamut's warbling filled the air, Magua led them on deeper into the forest.

ALICE: Oh, could you teach me to sing like that, Master Gamut?

GAMUT: Of course! Here in the wilderness we must sing holy songs, so we may blot out the vile voices of nature.

CORA: To me the sounds of nature are like the voice of God. Whose singing could be more heavenly than the birds'?

GAMUT: Young lady! The wilderness is the land of the devil—wild and untamed.

CORA: Not to me. It is a place wild and free, yes—but also a place full of good.

NARRATOR: Ignoring Cora's remarks, the singing master launched into another song—swinging his arm up and down to the rhythm in a most ridiculous manner.

MAGUA: Hshht! Too much noise!

HEYWARD: I agree. But the women seem to enjoy his music.

CORA: Ahem. Not all of us.

MAGUA: Women do not lead you. Magua does! You pale-faces make yourselves dogs to your women!

HEYWARD: Master Gamut, Magua thinks it best that you refrain from any more singing.

GAMUT: (*huffily*) Well, there is no accounting for the tastes of savages.

NARRATOR: As Major Heyward turned his attention back to the path, he thought he saw a pair of glittering eyes staring out at him from the underbrush.

HEYWARD: (*in shock*) What in the blazes?

NARRATOR: Then suddenly the eyes were no longer there.

HEYWARD: My eyes must have deceived me.

NARRATOR: The travelers passed on down the path. After they had disappeared, a Huron Indian—his face painted half red and half black—rose silently from the bushes. He let up a soft cry as a signal to others who were hidden nearby. (*soft Indian whoop*) Then, like a pack of wolves stalking

their prey, they advanced soundlessly. Little did Major Heyward's party know they were headed into an ambush.

Elsewhere in the same forest, upon the banks of a small but rapid spring, two men were conversing. One was a white man leaning forward on a long rifle. He was still in his middle years—his head covered in a hat made of animal skins. For clothing he wore a leather shirt, leggings of laced-up buckskins, and moccasins.

Seated opposite him was an Indian of about the same age. His head was closely shaved—except for a tuft of hair near the top with an eagle feather dangling from it. Across his knees lay a rifle. Before them lay a fresh deer carcass, and as strips of the beast cooked over hot coals, the two spoke in an Indian tongue.

HAWKEYE: Chingachgook! You are just teasing me now. Surely you will admit that white man weapons are superior to those of your people!

CHINGACHGOOK: Hmph. No.

HAWKEYE: Don't grunt at me, you old grizzly bear. Explain yourself.

CHINGACHGOOK: White man's guns require dry powder. Without it they are useless. They belch smoke and fire and tell enemies for miles around of your location. An arrow or tomahawk can kill silently.

HAWKEYE: Hmmm. Funny. You choose to use a rifle instead of a bow and arrow. Why is that?

CHINGACHGOOK: Hawkeye, just because your weapon is more deadly does not mean it is the better weapon.

HAWKEYE: I feel betrayed, my old friend. Does Uncas feel the same as you?

NARRATOR: The cry of a bird came out of the underbrush. (*bird cry*) Hawkeye pulled his hunting knife quickly out of the sheath, but before he could, a young Indian warrior flew out the underbrush and knocked him to the ground. (*whooping cry of an Indian*)

HAWKEYE: Uncas! Get off me!

NARRATOR: The grinning Indian helped Hawkeye back to his feet.

HAWKEYE: You rascal!

UNCAS: (*laugh*) If I had been enemy, you would be dead by now. (*laugh*)

HAWKEYE: Chingachgook, you should teach this son of yours some manners!

CHINGACHGOOK: He's right. You are getting old and slow.

HAWKEYE: Look who's talking.

NARRATOR: Perching himself upon a rock, Uncas picked up a piece of the roasting meat, but Hawkeye slapped it out of his hand.

HAWKEYE: First give us the report. What about the Hurons? Are they out there?

UNCAS: Yes. There are as many Hurons as the fingers of two hands, but they lie hidden like cowards.

HAWKEYE: Hmmm. The Huron Mingos have sold themselves to the French. I

wonder what brings them here—so near the British fort.

CHINGACHGOOK: No matter why they came, they will die just the same. Now that our stomachs are full, we will show them that we are men!

UNCAS: My stomach is not full.

CHINGACHGOOK: Too late. We move.

NARRATOR: Uncas looked at the uneaten meat longingly.

HAWKEYE: Who's laughing now?

NARRATOR: The three companions entered the woods—their rifles at the ready. Uncas pointed them to a rocky ridge where he had spied the enemy Indians.

HAWKEYE: (*whispering*) There is one now.

NARRATOR: Below them was a Huron—shielding himself behind a rock, watching the forest trail that led through the meadow. Chingachgook made a silent motion to Uncas, who put away his rifle and drew his bow. The young warrior drew his bow and released the shaft. (*Shoom!*) The arrow found its mark in the enemy's throat. (*dying cry*)

CHINGACHGOOK: See? Indian weapons. Silent.

HAWKEYE: Yeah, yeah.

NARRATOR: They examined the body of their enemy. Chingachgook drew his knife and began to remove the enemy's scalp.

HAWKEYE: He is a Mingo all right—decked out in his war paint. But Uncas said there were at least ten. Where are the others?

NARRATOR: Just then a twig snapped them. (*twig snap*)

HAWKEYE: Look out!

NARRATOR: An Indian was crouched upon a boulder above them—his tomahawk aimed at Chingachgook. Hawkeye's rifle was out in a moment. (*gunshot*) When the smoke cleared, the Indian had vanished.

HAWKEYE: What do you think of white man's weapons now?

NARRATOR: Chingachgook scowled at Hawkeye. The three companions ran to the top of the rock where the Indian had been perched. There they found a bit of blood splattered upon the gray rock.

HAWKEYE: Looks like I rubbed the bark from him at least. I heard him flying over the leaves like a black snake.

CHINGACHGOOK: Hmph. You should not have fired. Now every Mingo in this forest will be here soon.

HAWKEYE: That's gratitude for you! I just saved your life! Next time, I won't waste the powder!

(*distant shouting and singing*)

NARRATOR: Just then voices from the forest path below drew their attention. Uncas peered down with his keen eyes

UNCAS: A party of white men—and two women!

HAWKEYE: Uh-oh. Perhaps our mystery is solved. The Mingos were planning a nasty little ambush. We best warn them.

NARRATOR: It was Major Heyward's party making their way through the forest, and they were lost. An hour before, Magua had vanished into the woods, and now Heyward was leading them as best he could. Master Gamut was still singing loudly. (*loud singing*)

HEYWARD: Master Gamut, please! Grrr. There's not a blasted path to be seen anywhere! Where did that subtle fox go?

NARRATOR: As if in answer, Hawkeye appeared out of the forest—his long rifle on his arm—directly in front of the singing master.

GAMUT: (*cry of fright*) Ah-eee!

HAWKEYE: Greetings! You seem to be lost...and a bit confused. I heard your singing—if you can call it that. It's best to not be shouting and singing in these woods. I assume you are British subjects?

HEYWARD: Of course, sir! Put away your weapon and tell us your name!

HAWKEYE: I am a colonist, Natty Bumppo, by Christian name, but you may call me Hawkeye.

ALICE: Hawkeye? What a strange name!

CORA: And strange clothing, too. I have never seen such outlandish clothing among the civilized!

HAWKEYE: That is because I am only half-civilized, miss. But you will find that to be an advantage instead of a disadvantage. But I must warn you that you are in great peril! You are headed right into a trap.

HEYWARD: Impossible! We are being led by our Indian guide.

HAWKEYE: Am I blind? Where is he?

HEYWARD: Well, he *was* here. He has just gotten lost...temporarily.

HAWKEYE: (*chuckling*) An Indian lost in the forest? Fascinating. They know the woods like the back of their hand.

HEYWARD: He is leading us to Fort William Henry.

HAWKEYE: Then he is definitely a traitor because he has led you in the exact opposite direction of that place. And we just encountered two of his associates up there on the ridge. They were waiting to give you a nasty surprise.

ALICE: Oh my!

HAWKEYE: Does he have any reason to cause you mischief? Is he a Mohawk?

HEYWARD: He was originally a Huron.

HAWKEYE: Ha! A Mingo! That explains it. *Mingo* is what we call those deceitful Huron dogs. Yet unlike dogs, they don't have a scrap of loyalty about them.

HEYWARD: But he said he was adopted into the Mohawk tribe.

HAWKEYE: That doesn't matter. If God made him a Mingo, he will die a Mingo. Well, I would love to debate this with you all day, but this boils down to a very simple question—do you or do you not want to keep your scalps intact?

ALICE: (*whimpering*) Our scalps?

HEYWARD: How do we know we can trust you?

HAWKEYE: You don't. But what other choice do you have? If you wish it, my friends and I will lead you to safety.

ALICE: Your friends? I pray you do not mean more Indians!

HAWKEYE: I do, miss, but they are of the Mohican tribe. You will find that Indians are just like other men—some can be trusted, and others cannot.

NARRATOR: Major Heyward stared into Hawkeye's grinning face. There was a certain guileless truth about the man that made him seem trustworthy. He glanced to Cora, who nodded her approval.

HEYWARD: Very well. Lead us.

NARRATOR: Hawkeye made a bird cry, and his two Mohican companions emerged from the underbrush. Uncas smiled and nodded to the two Munro sisters.

HAWKEYE: Now, move swiftly and silently, and I just may be able to save your lives.

NARRATOR: Hawkeye and his Mohican companions led the group swiftly through the woods until they came to a bank of a river. Hawkeye and the two Indians flew into a rushed conversation in the Indian language. Hawkeye started pointing downriver, but Uncas urgently pointed upriver. Finally, Hawkeye shrugged.

HAWKEYE: Fine! You win, Uncas. (*to the others*) Uncas has won the argument. He says we should take you all to our secret fortress. I think it's risky, but his heart is sweeter than mine. But if we take you there, you must swear never to reveal its location to any mortal man.

NARRATOR: The travelers nodded their consent, and Cora turned to the Mohican warrior.

CORA: Thank you for pleading our case.

NARRATOR: Uncas smiled at the dark-haired maiden.

HAWKEYE: Dismount. We will lead the horses up the river to hide our tracks.

NARRATOR: The colt of the singing master let up a horrible whinny. (*horse whinny*) Chingachgook gestured toward it.

CHINGACHGOOK: Too noisy. It must die.

GAMUT: What? My colt? No!

HAWKEYE: Its cries will lead our enemies straight to us. What is more important—a human life or that of a four-legged animal?

NARRATOR: Before the singing master could reply, Chingachgook used his knife to end the colt's life and then laid its bleeding body in the swift flowing river.

GAMUT: (*yelling*) You—you—you just killed my horse!

NARRATOR: Hawkeye pointed a menacing finger toward the singing master.

HAWKEYE: Cry out like that again, and we will do the same to you!

NARRATOR: Gamut looked at him in horror. As the Mohicans grabbed the reins of the remaining horses and began to lead them upriver, Hawkeye pulled a canoe from the riverside brush and helped the two females inside. Then he and Heyward began to push the canoe upstream while the singing master waded and wept behind them.

GAMUT: (*weeping*) My poor colt!

NARRATOR: No sooner had the party disappeared around the bend of the river, a band of Hurons emerged from the forest. At their head was Magua—his hand resting on his wounded shoulder. He pointed to the horse tracks in the muddy riverside.

MAGUA: Hssht! They are near! The white man's daughters will be mine! After them!

NARRATOR: Meanwhile, the travelers had reached Hawkeye and the Mohicans' secret fortress. Twin waterfalls cascaded down from the bluff above with a jutting tower of rock separating the two cataracts. Hawkeye drew the canoe up close to the rocky tower's base.

HAWKEYE: There! Behind that waterfall is our refuge—our fortress.

NARRATOR: Hawkeye hid the canoe while the weary and soaked travelers scaled the rocky outcropping and made their way into the hidden cavemouth, where a larger cavern opened before them.

Soon Uncas and Chingachgook arrived, having hidden the horses at a safe distance. Uncas also carried a slaughtered deer upon his shoulders.

ALICE: (*cry of shock*) Ah! What is that?

UNCAS: Dinner.

NARRATOR: Uncas laid it down at the feet of Cora and beamed at her.

As darkness fell upon the outside world, the Indians hung a blanket over the cave opening, and Hawkeye lit a pine knot to give them light.

HEYWARD: What will happen if our enemies find us? We will be trapped here.

HAWKEYE: Old foxes like Chingachgook and me are too smart to be caught in a hole with only one exit. Now sit.

NARRATOR: The companions seated themselves around the fire. Uncas had gathered sassafras boughs for the two ladies to sit upon, and he led them to their seat. His father, however, grunted angrily at him.

CHINGACHGOOK: Hmph. Sit!

HEYWARD: What is troubling him?

HAWKEYE: (*chuckling*) Uncas is paying too much attention to the women. It is not the way of their tribe.

NARRATOR: Uncas ignored the reprimands of his father. In fact, it could be noted that it was the dark-haired Cora to whom Uncas paid special attention. As they roasted the venison, Cora broke the silence.

CORA: Although this *is* the strangest dinner I have ever eaten, what about some dinner conversation? Mister Hawkeye, can you tell us your tale? How did you become half-civilized—as you call it?

NARRATOR: Hawkeye laughed.

HAWKEYE: (*laugh*) To tell it all, it would take years. Although I am not yet forty, when a man has traveled far and seen much, he imagines that he has lived a long time. My parents died when I was just a boy, and I was taken in by the Delaware Indians. They taught me all that I know.

CORA: Are your two friends here Delawares then?

HAWKEYE: No, they are Mohicans. Chingachgook lived among the Delaware when his own tribe dwindled. You see, he and Uncas are the last of the Mohicans.

NARRATOR: Cora looked tenderly upon the two natives.

CORA: How sad.

HAWKEYE: Ah. The world continues to change. Those of us who do not change with it are doomed to fade away. It is the way of things.

CORA: How did just two become the last of a great tribe?

HAWKEYE: Why should I tell his story? I will let him speak it.

NARRATOR: Hawkeye spoke to the stoic Chingachgook, who nodded. Then his soft, but resonant, voice filled the cavern, and Hawkeye translated his words.

CHINGACHGOOK: Listen closely so that your ear does not drink a lie. When my people, the Mohicans, came to this land from the west, we fought the red men we found here—driving them into the forest to live like bears. Then we buried the tomahawk—becoming one people. We were happy. The earth gave us all that we needed. We took wives, who bore us children. We worshipped the Great Spirit.

NARRATOR: Chingachgook betrayed his deep emotion by letting his voice fall low.

CHINGACHGOOK: Then your people—the white man—came over the sea, and they brought their fire-water—a drink that makes men fools. My people drank until heaven and earth seemed to meet. They foolishly thought they had found the Great Spirit. Then they parted with their land. Foot by foot, they were driven back. Even I, a chief of my tribe, have never seen the land that is my people's true home. I have never seen the graves of my fathers.

NARRATOR: Chingachgook's eyes looked deep in the glowing embers of the fire. Uncas was staring there, too.

CHINGACHGOOK: One by one my people fell into the land of the spirits. Soon

it will be me. I am on the hilltop and must go down into the valley. Then Uncas will be the last—the last of the Mohicans.

NARRATOR: After Chingachgook finished his story, the party sat silently.

HAWKEYE: (*sigh*) Graves bring such solemn feelings over the mind. No grave for me. I fully intend to leave my own bones unburied—to be bleached by the sun and gnawed on by wolves. (*dry chuckle*)

NARRATOR: Hawkeye turned to the sullen singing master.

HAWKEYE: Friend, what is it that you do?

GAMUT: I am a singing master.

HAWKEYE: Hmmm. Sounds like a useless profession. But I suppose that is your gift, and I should not look down upon it. Sing us something.

GAMUT: I cannot. My heart is broken.

HAWKEYE: Still mourning your colt? I always heard that a holy song could heal a wounded heart. Sing for us—please. It is the least you can do for us saving your life.

GAMUT: (*grudgingly*) I will sing, but not for you. I will sing to God for saving us today.

NARRATOR: The singing master pulled out his little book, and soon the cave was filled with his clear, beautiful voice. The Munro sisters joined their voices with his in heavenly unison. (*sounds of beautiful singing*) Even Chingachgook and Uncas were moved by the song's beauty. At the song's

termination, they were all surprised to see tears upon Hawkeye's cheeks.

HAWKEYE: Thank you. That reminded me of my white mother. She used to sing me psalms at night before bed. Master Gamut, forgive me for looking down upon your gift. There is power in it. We all have gifts—white men and red men—and we must use them as best we can.

NARRATOR: The singing master bowed his head respectfully. After this, Uncas led the women to a deeper cavern, where they were to bed down for the night. Then with a friendly smile, he left them alone.

ALICE: Cora, we were very selfish to come into the wilderness, weren't we? We should have stayed at our home where we were safe. We have put everyone at risk.

CORA: What is done is done.

NARRATOR: As they laid their heads down, Alice shed silent tears. In the dim light they could see the form of Uncas standing guard at their cavern door.

ALICE: Look, Cora. I believe I could sleep in peace, even in this place, knowing that such a fearless warrior watches over me.

CORA: So could I, Alice.

NARRATOR: With the sounds of the rushing falls roaring nearby, the travelers succumbed to a serene sleep.

It was close to dawn when a horrible, inhuman cry rang out through the cavern—as if all the inhabitants of hell were crying out at once. (*hellish cry*) All of the travelers came to life at once—their hearts beating

out of their chests. As the fire-lit faces of the women flashed with fear, the Mohicans snuffed out the light. Then out of the darkness boomed the voice of Hawkeye.

HAWKEYE: Our enemies are here! They have found us!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the theme of civilization versus wilderness appear in this story?
2. What motivation might Magua have for trying to ambush Colonel Munro's daughters?
3. How are the personalities of the Munro sisters contrasting?
4. What lessons has the wild taught the travelers so far?
5. How does David Gamut view nature? Is he correct?
6. How is Hawkeye a hybrid of two cultures?
7. Are the white characters racist toward the Native American characters? Explain.
8. Cooper believed that all people have gifts that should be used to the best of their ability. Do you agree with this?