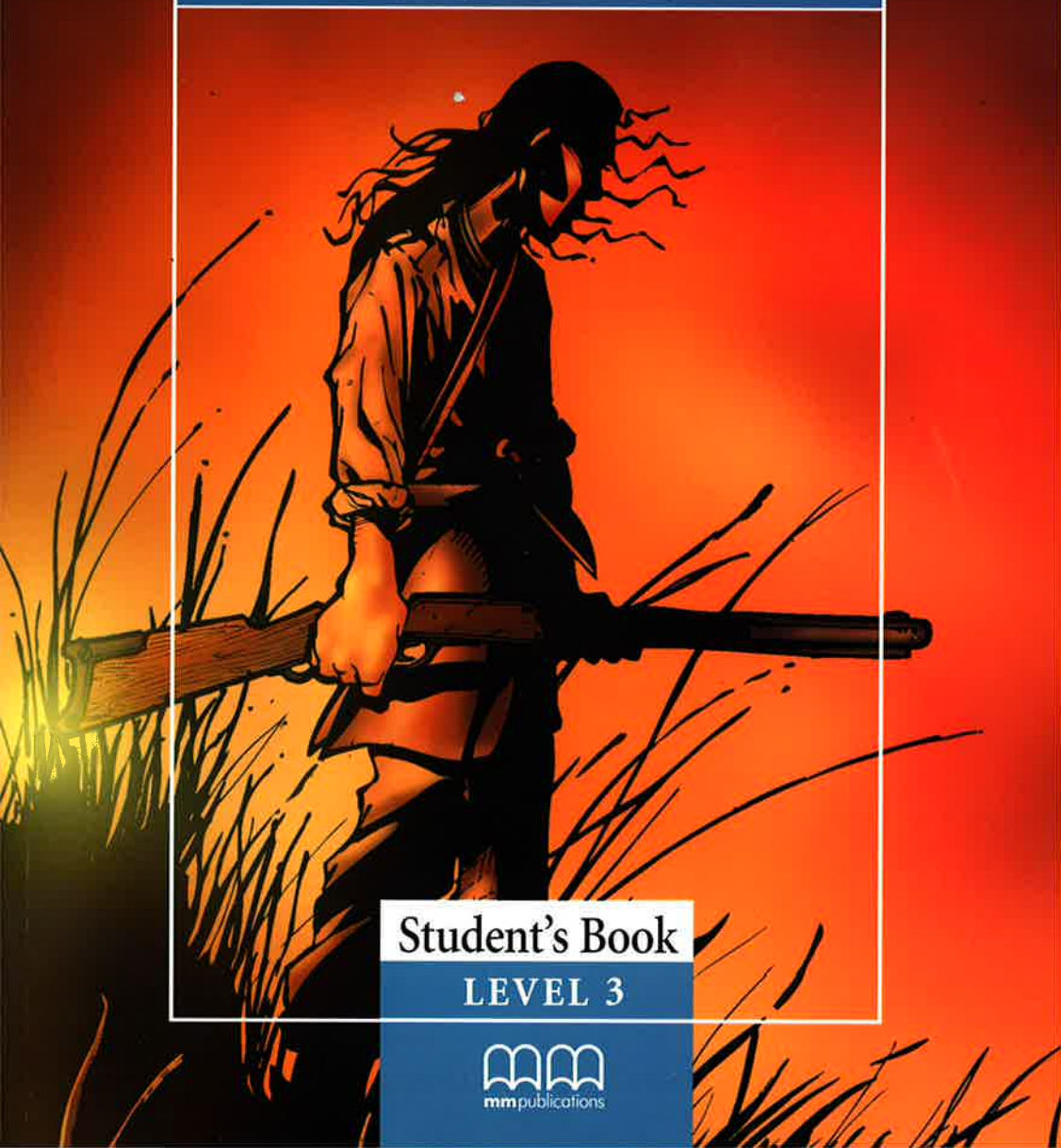
GRADED READERS

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

J. F. COOPER



Student's Book

LEVEL 3

mmpublications

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Chapter 1

In 1757, North America was still a colony. England ruled part of it, while France ruled the other part. North America was a very wild country and the Indians, who were the original inhabitants, knew it best. The Indians were also divided. Some tribes fought for the French, while other tribes fought on the side of the English.

The leader of the English forces in the region was General Webb. He was the commander of Fort Edward, which was on the Hudson River. He was receiving news from an Indian called Magua about General Montcalm, the commander of the French army.

"Montcalm is marching towards Fort William Henry," said Magua to General Webb.

"How big is his army?" asked General Webb.

"There are as many soldiers as there are leaves on the trees," answered Magua.

"Then we must send help to Fort William Henry to support Colonel Munro," said General Webb. He then called Major Heyward to his room.

"Sir, you sent for me?" asked Major Duncan Heyward.

"I believe you know the family of Colonel Munro, who commands Fort William Henry," said General Webb.

"I certainly do," said Major Heyward with a smile on his face. He was thinking about Alice Munro, who was one of Colonel Munro's two daughters. Alice Munro was a very beautiful young woman.

"Well, I have a job for you," said General Webb, "one I believe you won't find too unpleasant. I want you to take Magua and escort Colonel Munro's daughters to Fort William Henry. They want to visit their father. You will also inform Colonel Munro that I am sending him one thousand five hundred men to help him

defend the Fort against the French army."

"It will be an honour, Sir," said Major Heyward.

Major Heyward was very happy. He admired Colonel Munro's bravery and was fond of his two daughters, though a little more than just fond of Alice Munro. So, he was happy to have an opportunity to be with the Munro family again.

"Come on then," he said to Magua. "Let us prepare to leave."

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The party set off the next morning for Fort William Henry. The two young women and Major Heyward rode on horses and Magua walked in front of them.

"I don't like that Indian," said Cora Munro to Major Heyward. "He is also a Huron. They are our enemies. They fight for the French, don't they?" she asked.

"You're right," answered Major Heyward, "but Magua has lived with the Mohawks, who fight for us. He knows a secret path through the forest, so I can take you safely to your father."

Major Heyward then turned to Alice, who looked worried, and said, "You must know that I will protect you with my life."

Cora, who knew that Major Heyward had feelings for her sister, smiled at him and said, "We know that, Duncan." She then turned to Alice and said, "I am sure Magua will take us safely through the forest."

Alice relaxed a little and the three of them followed the silent Magua through the forest.





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CHAPTER 2

Just a few miles away in the same forest, two men were sitting in a clearing. One of them was Chingachgook, who was an Indian. The other man, although he was very brown from the sun, was a white man. His name was Hawk-eye. Chingachgook was explaining to Hawk-eye what the great country was like before the white man from Europe arrived.

"I come from a great tribe," explained Chingachgook, "but now my son Uncas and I are the last of the Mohicans."

Just then, a young Indian warrior appeared on the bank of the river which ran through the clearing in the forest. It was Uncas, the son of Chingachgook.

"The horses of white men are coming towards us," said Uncas. "It is dangerous for them in this forest alone."

"I hear nothing," said Hawk-eye.

They all kept quiet and listened. A few minutes later Hawk-eye said, "Now I can hear them and you are correct, Uncas. They must be fools to travel through this forest."



Just then, Major Heyward appeared out of the forest into the clearing. Hawk-eye quickly picked up his rifle and asked, "Who comes here?"

"We are servants of the King going to Fort William Henry," answered Major Heyward. "I am taking Colonel Munro's daughters there."

"Then you are lost," said Hawk-eye. "Fort William Henry is in the opposite direction."

"We cannot be lost," said Major Heyward. "We have an Indian guide."

"Which tribe is he from?" asked Chingachgook. "Is he a Mohawk?"

"He is now part of the Mohawk tribe, but he was born a Huron," answered Major Heyward.

"That is why you are lost," laughed Hawk-eye. "You can never trust a Huron. He has probably brought you this way so that his people can rob and kill you."

Just then, Magua, who was standing behind Major Heyward's horse, ran off into the forest.

"Oh no! What are we going to do now?" cried out Alice.

"I knew we were wrong to trust that man," said Cora.

"How far is it to Fort William Henry?" Major Heyward asked Hawk-eye.

"Not very far," answered Hawk-eye. "But it will soon be dark and it is not safe to travel through the forest during the night."

"But we can't stay here," said Major Heyward. "Magua and his Huron friends could attack us during the night."

"Don't worry. Further up the river there is a cave, where we can spend the night," said Hawk-eye. "But first we must hide the horses."



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