

bad for us to go as fast as we wished. Our horses were excessively fatigued. Each kept silence, which was interrupted only by the trot of the horses and the snoring of the lady's maid in a deep sleep. My thoughts were with my sick father. I did not hide from myself that, because of his great age, there would likely be danger; that this danger did even exist; for without it, he would not have recalled us before the time fixed.

Aninia, on her side, did not feel disposed for conversation. Her soul was divided between two sentiments; we approached each minute this venerated father, on whose state she made reflexions analogous to mine, whilst she was at the same time going further and further from her betrothed.

It was already near midnight, and no extraordinary incident had as yet interrupted our voyage, when suddenly our horses began to show an unusual inquietude. They panted and they began to run much quicker, without being excited by either word or whip. We had had these animals for several years, and they would not quit their usual gait but for some extraordinary motive. They appeared frightened, and often turned their head as if stimulated by an unknown power. Soon their leaps were more marked, and Kosko, our driver, was obliged to apply some strokes of the whip, which the poor beasts submitted to with inconceivable resistance.

Aninia was too profoundly preoccupied to give the least attention to the horses; but I, who knew their habits, felt myself singularly moved: I began to foresee some extraordinary incident.

At this moment, the old Kosko appeared to me to be suffering some painful sentiment; he looked several times behind him, lent his ear with attention, then he suddenly gave the reins to the horses, who might follow their instinct and went off at once on the gallop.

I was seated in the front of the sleigh so close to the driver that my mouth was close to his ear.

"What is the matter with you, Kosko?" said I to him, low enough so that Aninia might not hear me, "you appear frightened and seem to partake of the uneasiness of the horses."

The old man reflected an instant, then replied to me scarcely moving his lips, "I fear the wolves are on our track; the cold has driven them out of the forests; hunger is leading them to us, and we are lost if the quickness of the horses does not save us from their murderous teeth."

I who speak to you, added M. de Geroskoff, interrupting his recital, have seen death under terrible forms, but neither the noise of cavalry charges nor murderous batteries have ever made such an impression as those words said at the hour of midnight, in those frozen solitudes,