

Les Maisons Cabassud à la Ville D'Avray, Camille Corot



5. gudgeon (gulf en) n. small European freshwater fish.

Morissot glued his ear to the ground and listened for sounds of anyone walking in the vicinity. He heard nothing. They were indeed alone, all alone.

Reassured, they started to fish.

Opposite them Marante Island, deserted, hid them from the other bank. The little building which had housed a restaurant was shut up and looked as if it had been abandoned for years.

M. Sauvage caught the first gudgeon.⁵ Morissot got the second, and from then on they pulled in their lines every minute or two with a silver little fish squirming on the end, a truly miraculous draught. Skillfully they slipped the fish into a sack made of fine net which they had hung in the water at their feet. And happiness pervaded their whole being, the happiness which seizes upon you when you regain a cherished pleasure of which you have long been deprived. The good sun was pouring down its warmth on their backs. They heard nothing more; they no longer thought about anything at all; they forgot about the rest of the world—they were fishing!

But suddenly a dull sound which seemed to come from under ground made the earth tremble. The cannon were beginning. Morissot turned and saw, over the bank to the left, the great silhouette of Mount Valerien wearing a white plume on its brow, powder-smoke which it had just spit out.

What causes the two friends to feel uneasy?

Reading Check

Reading Strategy
Identifying Significant Details What can you conclude based on Morissot's precautions?