

## ***The King of the Forest***

With a hint of pride and a little smile, I have to admit  
That despite my 200 years, I'm still quite fit.  
Many are those who follow the twisting trail  
That leads to the depths of the forest to take my picture.  
Once at my feet, with emotion they loudly exclaim:  
"This tall, amazing maple is so old, so handsome!"  
Hesitant, they touch my rough, chapped bark.  
Then their eyes travel up my long, slender trunk  
To the deep fissure, an old wound.  
And it's there, high up, that they discover beneath the fork  
The life that thrives in my leafy mane.  
My tenants love me; I have many branches.  
During the summer, a mother robin built  
With mud and twigs, a little nest.  
On the floor above, her neighbours are busy;  
A squirrel family runs all day  
And on the highest of the long branches  
Roosts a black crow who loves to loudly call.  
In the fall, some of my friends leave for new horizons.  
I say goodbye and wish them a pleasant journey.  
My roots run deep, so at home I stay;  
This beautiful time of year brings me great joy.  
Like a glowing sunset sky, for a brief time  
I proudly display my cloak of many colours.  
But a heavy downpour and a violent wind  
Carry my leaves away and tell me it's time  
To conserve my strength, to keep warm.  
Ah! If only I could wear a hat!  
Then begins the season of snow squalls and endless nights  
When I listen to the stories of my cousins, the poplar, the oak and the pine.  
And at long last comes the thaw; I feel very lightheaded.  
The sap rises in my veins and revives me.  
I stretch my limbs, I bloom, I grow and I say to myself  
I am really fortunate, I love life so much.  
One of these days, no matter the season, come and visit me.  
You'll always find me here in the woods, where I plan to stay.