ЛЕГКО ЧИТАЕМ ПО-АНГЛИЙСКИ

1 УРОВЕНЬ



THE BEST TALES OF ENCHANTED SCOTLAND

ЛУЧШИЕ СКАЗКИ ЗАГАДОЧНОЙ ШОТЛАНДИИ

словарь • комментарии • упражнения

Легко читаем по-английски

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Что вы знаете о круге фей? Что будет, если присоединиться к их весёлой пляске? Кто такой брауни и как выглядят шотландские русалки? Хотите узнать ответы на эти и другие вопросы? Тогда прислушайтесь к зову приключений и позвольте духам туманной Шотландии поведать вам предания своих предков. Пособие предназначено для начинающих изучать английский язык. Тексты сказок даны в адаптации и сопровождаются комментариями для облегчения чтения. После каждой сказки вы найдете упражнения на понимание прочитанного. В конце книги расположен объемный словарь со всей необходимой лексикой.

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The Best Tales of Enchanted Scotland

Thomas the Rhymer[1]

Thomas Learmont was a young gentleman in Scotland in the thirteenth century. He loved books, poetry, and music. Above all, he loved to study nature, and to watch the habits of the beasts and birds.

One sunny May morning, Thomas went into the woods. It was a lovely morning – fresh, and bright, and warm. Everything was very beautiful.

The trees were green with the new leaves. Yellow flowers turned up their faces to the morning sky. The little birds sang, and hundreds of insects flew backwards and forwards in the sunshine. The bright-eyed water-rats poked their noses out of their holes.

Thomas felt very happy with the gladness of it all. He lay down under a tree, to watch the nature around him.

Suddenly he saw a very beautiful lady. She came to him on a grey horse. She wore a silk dress, the colour of the fresh spring grass. From her shoulders hung a velvet mantle. She had golden hair. On her head sparkled a diadem of precious stones. It flashed like fire in the sunlight.

Her horse's reins were of gold. They had little silver bells. As she rode along, she made a sound like fairy music.

She carried a**hunting-horn**[2] and arrows. She led seven hunting dogs. Many dogs ran at her horse's side.

She was singing an old Scotch song. She was like a queen. Her dress was really magnificent. Thomas wanted to stand on his knees by the side of the path and worship her. He thought it was the**Blessed Virgin herself**[3]!

The rider came to him, and understood his thoughts. So she shook her head sadly.

“I am not that Blessed Lady, as you think,” she said. “Men call me Queen. But I am the Queen of Fairy-land, and not the Queen of Heaven.”

It seemed she said the truth. Thomas forgot prudence, and caution, and**common-sense**[4]. It was dangerous for people to have business with Fairies. He knew that. But he was very entranced with the Lady's beauty. And he begged her to give him a kiss. This was just what she wanted. If she kisses him she has him in her power!

Their lips met. To the young man's horror, an awful change came over her. Her beautiful clothes disappeared. She stood in a long grey dress. It was just the colour of ashes. Her beauty faded away also. She grew old and ugly. Half of her golden hair went grey. She saw the poor man's surprise and terror and laughed.

“I am not so fair now,” she said. “You sold yourself, Thomas! Now you are my servant for seven long years. Who kisses the Fairy Queen must go with her to Fairy-land. He will serve her there.”

Poor Thomas fell on his knees and asked for mercy. But the Queen only laughed in his face. Then she brought her horse to him.

“You asked for the kiss,” she said, “and now you must pay the price. Now get on the horse behind me.”

So Thomas, with a sigh, got on the horse behind her. The grey horse galloped off.

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[1] Thomas the Rhymer – Томас-Рифмач

[2] hunting-horn – охотничий рог

[3] Blessed Virgin herself – сама Пресвятая Дева

[4] common-sense – здравый смысл

On and on they went. They were faster than the wind. At last, they left the land of the men. They came to the edge of a great desert. It stretched before them. It was dry, and bare, and desolate.

How to cross this desert? How to reach the other side of it? The Fairy Queen suddenly stopped the horse.

“Now you must get down on earth, Thomas,” said the Lady. “Lie down. Lay your head on my knee. I will show you hidden things. You cannot see them by mortal eyes.”

Thomas dismounted. He lay down, and rested his head on the Fairy Queen's knee. He looked once more over the desert. Everything changed. He saw three roads across it. He did not notice them before. Each of these three roads was different.

One of them was broad, level and even. It ran straight on across the sand. No one who travels by it will lose his way.

The second road was narrow, winding and long. There were bushes on both sides of it. Those bushes grew very high. Their branches were very wild and tangled.

The third road was through a hillside among brackens and heather. It looked pleasant.

“Now,” said the Fairy Queen, “I shall tell you where these three roads lead to. The first road, as you see, is broad, even and easy. Many people choose it. But it leads to a bad end. So the folk that choose it repent their choice for ever.

The narrow road is hampered and hindered by the thorns and the briars. Where does it lead? That is the Road of Righteousness. Although it is hard and irksome, it ends in a glorious City. That City is called the City of the Great King.

The third road runs up the brae among the ferns. I can say, Thomas, where it leads. It leads unto fair Elf-land. We will take that road.

Remember, Thomas, if you hope to see your home again, take care of your tongue when we reach our journey's end. Speak no single word to anyone**save me**[5]. The mortal who opens his lips rashly in Fairy-land must bide there for ever.”

Then she told him to get on her horse again. They rode on. The road was not very lovely, however. It led them into a narrow**ravine**[6]. The ravine went right down under the earth. There was no ray of light to guide them. The air was dank and heavy under the earth. There was a sound of water everywhere. It was cold and chill.

Thomas was scared. Where is their journey's end? At last the darkness began to lighten. The light grew stronger. Soon they were back in broad sunshine.

Then Thomas looked up. They rode through a beautiful orchard. He saw apples and pears, dates and figs and wine-berries. His tongue was parched and dry. He wanted to eat some of the fruit.

He stretched out his hand to take some of it. But his companion turned in her saddle and forbade him.

“There is nothing safe for you to eat here,” she said. “I will give you an apple. If you touch anything else you will remain in Fairy-land for ever.”

So poor Thomas did not take anything.

They rode slowly on, until they came to a tiny tree. The tree was covered with red apples. The Fairy Queen took one, and gave it to her companion.

“I can give you this,” she said, “and I do it gladly. These apples are the Apples of Truth. Your lips will never be able to tell a lie after eating the apple.”

Thomas took the apple, and ate it. For evermore the Grace of Truth rested on his lips. That is why men called him “True Thomas.”

Soon they came to a magnificent Castle on a hillside.

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[5] save me – кроме меня

[6] ravine – ущелье

"This is my home," said the Queen proudly. "There stays my Lord and all the Nobles of his court. My Lord does not like any strangers near me. I ask you to utter no word to anyone who speaks to you. If anyone asks me who and what you are, I will tell them that you are dumb. So nobody will notice you in the crowd."

With these words the Lady raised her hunting-horn and blew it. A marvelous change came over her again. Her ugly**ash-covered**[7] gown dropped off her. The grey colour in her hair vanished. She appeared once more in her green riding-skirt and mantle. Her face grew young and fair.

A wonderful change passed over Thomas also. His rough country clothes were transformed into a suit of fine brown cloth. On his feet he wore satin shoes.

Immediately the sound of the horn rang out. The doors of the Castle opened. The King hurried out to meet the Queen. He was with his Knights and Ladies, Minstrels and**Page-boys**[8]. Thomas slid from his horse. Then he passed into the Castle.

Everyone was very glad to see the Queen. The people crowded in the Great Hall. She spoke to them graciously. She allowed them to kiss her hand. Then she passed, with her husband, to the two thrones. The Royal pair sat down to watch the revels.

Poor Thomas, meanwhile, stood far away at the other end of the Hall. He was fascinated by the extraordinary scene.

All the fine Ladies, and Courtiers, and Knights danced in one part of the Hall. The huntsmen were in another part. They carried in great deer. Then they threw them down in heaps on the floor. Some cooks stood beside the dead animals. They cut the deer up into joints, and took the joints away to the kitchen.

It was a very strange, fantastic scene. Thomas stood and gazed, and gazed. He did not speak a word to anybody. This went on for three long days. Then the Queen rose from her throne. She crossed the Hall to Thomas.

"It is time to go home, Thomas," she said. "You will see your home again. You are here seven long years."

Thomas looked at her in amazement.

"You spoke of seven long years, Lady," he exclaimed, "but I am here three days."

The Queen smiled.

"Time passes quickly in Fairy-land, my friend," she replied. "You think that you spent here three days. But we met seven years ago. And now it is time for you to go. I want to stay with you longer, but I dare not. Every seventh year an Evil Spirit comes from the Regions of Darkness. He carries back with him one of our followers. He chooses the follower himself. You are a good fellow. I fear that he will choose you. So I will take you back to your own country this night."

Once more the grey horse appeared. Thomas and the Queen mounted it. Then they returned to his country.

Thomas asked the Queen to give him something as a gift from her Fairy-land.

"I gave you the Gift of Truth," she replied. "I will now give you the Gifts of Prophecy and Poetry. You will be able to foretell the future. And you will be able to write wondrous verses. And here is something that mortals can see with their own eyes. Look: this is a Harp from Fairy-land. Good-bye, my friend. Some day, maybe, I will return again."

With these words the Lady vanished. Thomas was a little sorry to come back to the ordinary world.

After this, he lived for many years in his Castle. The fame of his poetry and of his prophecies spread all over the country. The people named him True Thomas, and Thomas the Rhymer.

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[7] ash-covered – покрытый пеплом

[8] Page-boys – пажи

I cannot write down for you all the prophecies which Thomas uttered. He foretold some great battles and the Union of England and Scotland. It came true in 1603, when King James became Monarch of both countries.

Упражнения

1. Сколько дорог через пустыню увидел Томас?
1) 2
2) 3
3) 4
4) 5
5) 6

2. Вставьте нужное слово:
Thomas foretold the Union of England and _____.
1) Ireland
2) Scotland
3) Wales
4) France
5) Italy

3. Как ещё называли Томаса-рифмача?
1) Thomas the Great
2) Brave Thomas
3) Thomas the King
4) Sly Thomas
5) True Thomas

4. Что такое hunting-horn?
1) ружьё
2) седло для коня
3) охотничий рожок
4) посох
5) шляпа с пером

5. Вставьте нужный предлог:
A wonderful change passed _____ Thomas.
1) over
2) about
3) on
4) in
5) at

Ответы:
3, Scotland, True Thomas, охотничий рожок, over

The Seal Catcher and the Merman

Once upon a time there was a man who lived in the north of Scotland. He and his family lived in a little cottage by the seashore. He caught seals and sold their fur. It was very valuable.

He earned much money. The seals came out of the sea, and lay on the rocks near his house. It was not difficult to kill them.

Some of those seals were larger than others. The country people called them “Roane”. The people whispered that they were not seals, but Mermen and Merwomen. They said these Mermen and Merwomen were coming to the shore from their own country. This country was under the ocean. But the seal catcher only laughed at them. He said that it was necessary to kill those seals. Their skins were big, and he got an extra price for them.

One day, he stabbed a seal with his knife. The creature cried of pain and slipped off the rock into the sea. Then the creature disappeared under the water and carried the knife along with it.

The seal catcher was very annoyed at his clumsiness. He was also very annoyed at the loss of his knife. He went home to dinner. On his way he met a strange horseman. That horseman rode on a gigantic horse. The seal catcher stopped and looked at him in astonishment.

The stranger stopped also. Then the stranger asked about his business. When the horseman heard that he was a seal catcher, he immediately ordered a great number of seal skins. The seal catcher was delighted. Such an order meant a large sum of money to him. But it was absolutely necessary to bring the skins that evening.

“I cannot do it,” said the hunter. “The seals will not come back to the rocks again until tomorrow morning.”

“I can take you to a place with many seals,” answered the stranger. “Just mount behind me on my horse. Come with me.”

The seal catcher agreed to this. He climbed up behind the rider. The rider shook his bridle rein. The great horse galloped off. On and on they went. They flew like the wind. At last they came to the edge of a huge precipice. The face of that precipice went sheer down to the sea. Here the mysterious horseman pulled up his steed with a jerk.

“**Get off now**[9],” he said shortly.

The seal catcher got off. He found himself safe on the ground. Then he peeped cautiously over the edge of the cliff. Where are the seals? To his astonishment he saw only the blue sea.

“Where are your seals?” he asked anxiously.

[9] Get off now. – Слезай.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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