ANGOL IRODALOM EREDETIBEN MAGYARÁZATOKKAL

- Leacock novellák -



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STEPHEN LEACOCK

Stephen Butler Leacock (1869-1944) az angliai Hampshireben született. Hétéves korában a család egy kanadai farmra költözött, ahol Leacock és tíz testvére meglehetősen nehéz körülmények között nevelkedett fel. A középiskola elvégzése után nyelveket és irodalmat tanult a torontói egyetemen és még a diploma megszerzése előtt tanítani kezdett egy iskolában.

Az 1890-es években, hogy jövedelmét kiegészítse, Leacock különböző folyóiratoknak írt cikkeket. Humoros írásai gyorsan népszerűek lettek, ám az írót inkább a gazdaságtudomány és a politika érdekelte. Beiratkozott a chicagói egyetemre, melynek elvégzése után a montreali McGill egyetemen lett előadó, 1908-tól pedig a közgazdasági és politikai tudományok tanszékének vezetője.

Leacock több mint hatvan könyvet írt. Történelmi, gazdasági és életrajzi munkái mellett leginkább paródiák, humoros esszék és elbeszélések hosszú sorával váltotta ki az olvasók elismerését. Az 1920-as években az angol nyelvterület legismertebb humoristájának tartották.

Az író, bár görbe tükörben mutatja jellemünk és társadalmunk visszásságait, soha nem él vissza a szatíra eszközével, szelíd gúnyolódása távol áll attól, hogy bárkit is megbántson. Írásainak könnyed hangvétele, nyelvi és stiláris humora, a megrajzolt figurák és helyzetek groteszk valószerűtlensége mögött páratlan emberszeretet rejlik.

ELŐSZÓ

A Szépirodalom eredetiben sorozat – mint neve is mutatja – értékes irodalmi műveket juttat el az olvasóhoz a maguk eredetiségében azzal a céllal, hogy a nyelvtanulók minél szélesebb köre élvezhesse az érdekes, ötletes írások eredeti nyelvezetét. Segítségképpen a lap szélén megadjuk a nehezebb szavak, kifejezések fordítását. A teljesebb megértést a novellák végén található jegyzetek is segítik, amelyek elsősorban kulturális kiegészítést nyújtanak.

Használati javaslat

Ne akarjuk a könyvet egyszerre végigolvasni. Válasszunk ki egy-egy elbeszélést, és először olvassuk el szótár nélkül – az sem baj, ha az oldal szélén lévő segítséget sem vesszük igénybe – és próbáljuk megérteni a történetet. Ezután olvassuk el újra, most már a szöveg nyelvi jelenségeire is figyelve. Ekkor már szótárt is használhatunk. Ha érdekes szót vagy kifejezést találunk, jelöljük meg, és később foglaljuk saját szerkesztésű mondatokba. Ezáltal az könnyebben válik aktív szókincsünk részévé.

Fontos tanács

Az eredeti szöveg mellett található fordítás nem feltétlenül a szóban forgó kifejezés legpontosabb magyar megfelelője, hanem az adott mondatba legjobban illő változat – ezért mielőtt a szót vagy kifejezést más szövegkörnyezetben használnánk, ellenőrizzük annak jelentését a szótárban.

MY UNKNOWN FRIEND

He stepped into the smoking **compartment** of the Pullman,¹ where I was sitting alone.

fülke

He had on a long **fur-lined** coat, and he carried a fifty-dollar suit case that he szőrmebéléses

put down on the seat.

Then he saw me.

"Well! well!" he said, and

recognition broke out all over his face like morning sunlight.

felismerés

"Well! well!" I repeated.

"By Jove!" he said, shaking hands vigorously, "who would have thought of seeing you?"

A kutyafáját!

élénken

"Who, indeed," I thought to myself.

valóban

He looked at me more closely.

"You haven't changed a bit," he said.

"Neither have you," said I heartily.

szívélvesen

"You may be *a little* **stout**er," he went testes on critically.

"Yes," I said, "a little; but you're stouter yourself."

This of course would help to **explain**

magyarázatot ad

away any undue stoutness on my part.

// nemkívánatos

"No," I continued **boldly** and **firmly**, "you look just about the same as ever."

bátran // határozottan

And all the time I was wondering who he was. I didn't know him from Adam: I couldn't recall him a bit. I don't mean that my memory is weak. On the contrary, it is singularly tenacious. True, I find it very hard to remember people's names; very often, too, it is hard for me to recall a face, and frequently I fail to recall a person's appearance, and of course clothes are a thing one doesn't notice. But apart from these details I never forget anybody, and I am proud of it. But when it does happen that a name or face **escape**s me I never lose my presence of mind. I know just how to deal with the situation. It only needs coolness and intellect, and it all comes right.

My friend sat down.

"It's a long time since we met," he said.

"A long time," I repeated with something of a note of sadness. I wanted him to feel that I, too, had **suffered** from it.

"But it has gone very quickly."

"Like a flash." I assented cheerfully.

"Strange," he said, "how life goes on and we **lose track of** people, and things **alter**. I often think about it. I sometimes fogalmam sem volt róla, hogy ki ő emlékszik ellenkezőleg

páratlanul // megbízható

gyakran

nem képes // felidéz // kinézet

észrevesz // részlet büszke (vmire)

kimegy a fejéből lélekjelenlét kezel

higgadtság

szenved

villanás // helyesel // vidáman különös nyomát veszti változik wonder," he continued, "where all the old **gang** are gone to."

csapat

"So do I," I said. In fact I was wondering about it at the very moment. I always find in **circumstance**s like these that a man begins sooner or later to talk of the "old gang" or "the boys" or "the crowd". That's where the **opportunity** comes in to **gather** who he is.

körülmény

alkalom

kikövetkeztet

"Do you ever go back to the old place?" he asked.

. határozottan

"Never," I said, firmly and **flatly**. This had to be absolute. I felt that once and for all the "old place" must be **ruled out** of the discussion, till I could **discover** where it was.

kihagy rájön

"No," he went on, "I suppose you'd hardly care to."

óvatosan

"Not now," I said very **gently**.

"I understand. I beg your pardon," he said, and there was silence for a few moments.

So far I had scored the first point. There was **evidently** an old place somewhere to which I would hardly care to go. That was something to build on.

nvilvánvalóan

Presently he began again.

"Yes," he said. "I sometimes meet

some of the old boys and they begin to talk of you and wonder what you're doing."

"Poor things," I thought, but I didn't say it.

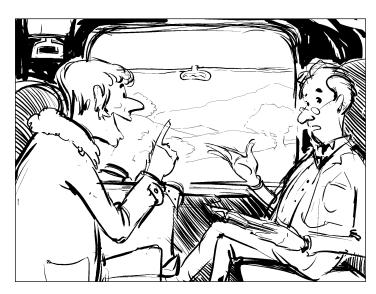
I knew it was time now to make a **bold stroke**; so I used the **method** that I always **employ**. I **struck in** with great **animation**.

merész húzás // módszer alkalmaz // nekilát élénkség

"Say!" I said, "where's Billy? Do you ever hear anything of Billy now?"

This is really a very **safe** line. Every old gang has a Billy in it.

biztonságos



"Do you ever go back to the old place?"

"Yes," said my friend, "sure—Billy is ranching out in Montana³. I saw him in Chicago last spring, weighed about two hundred pounds⁴—you wouldn't know him."

állatot tenyészt (farmon) valamennyi súlya van

"No, I certainly wouldn't," I **murmur**ed to myself.

dünnvöa

"And where's Pete?" I said. This was safe ground. There is always a Pete.

"You mean Billy's brother," he said.

"Yes, yes, Billy's brother Pete. I often think of him."

"Oh," answered the unknown man,
"old Pete's quite changed—settled
down altogether." Here he began to
chuckle, "Why, Pete's married!"

megállapodik

kuncog // nahát

I started to laugh, too. Under these **circumstance**s it is always supposed to be very funny if a man has got married. The **notion** of old Peter (whoever he is) being married is **presume**d to be simply **killing**. I kept on chuckling away quietly at the **mere** idea of it. I was hoping that I might manage to keep on laughing till the train stopped.

körülmény

gondolat

vél

iszonyúan mulatságos

puszta

I had only fifty miles more to go. It's not hard to laugh for fifty miles if you know how.

But my friend wouldn't be content

elégedett

with it.

"I often meant to write to you," he said, his voice falling to a confidential tone, "especially when I heard of your loss."

hizalmas

hang

I remained quiet. What had I lost? Was it money? And if so, how much? And why had I lost it? I wondered if it had **ruin**ed me or only **partly** ruined me.

marad

"One can never get over a loss like that," he continued solemnly.

tönkretesz // részben túlteszi magát komolyan

Evidently I was plumb ruined. But I said nothing and remained under cover, waiting to draw his fire.

nyilvánvalóan // teljesen

fedezékben

"Yes," the man went on, "death is always sad."

hogy ő lépjen

Death! Oh, that was it, was it? I almost **hiccough**ed with **joy**. That was easy. Handling a case of death in these conversations is simplicity itself. One has only to sit quiet and wait to find out who is dead.

csuklik // öröm

kezel // haláleset

egyszerűbb nem is lehetne

"Yes," I murmured, "very sad. But it has its other side, too."

"Very true, especially, of course, at that age."

"As you say at that age, and after such a life."

"Strong and bright to the last I

suppose," he continued, very **sympa**thetically.

együtt érzően

"Yes," I said, falling on sure ground, "able to sit up in bed and smoke within a few days of the end."

zavarban

"What," he said, **perplexed** "did your grandmother..."

My grandmother! That was it, was it?

"Pardon me," I said **provoke**d at my own stupidity; "when I say *smoked*, I mean able to sit up and be smoked to, a **habit** she had, being read to, and being smoked to—only thing that seemed to **compose** her..."

dühít

szokás

As I **slid** this I could hear the **rattle** and **clatter** of the train running past the semaphores and **switch points** and **slacking** to a stop.

megnyugtat

kimond // zörgés

csattogás

váltó lassít

My friend looked quickly out of the window.

His face was agitated.

izgatott

"Great heavens!" he said, "that's the junction. I've missed my stop. I should have got out at the last station. Say, porter," he called out into the alleyway,

vasúti csomópont

kalauz // folyosó

"how long do we stop here?"

"Just two minutes, sah,5" called a

"Just two minutes, sah,⁵" called a voice back. "She's⁶ late, now she's makin' up tahm⁷!" My friend had **hop**ped **up** now and had pulled out a **bunch of keys** and was **fumbling** at the lock of the suit case.

felugrik kulcscsomó matat

táviratozik

"I'll have to **wire** back or something," he **gasp**ed. "**Confound** this lock—my money's in the suit case."

zihál // a fene egye meg

My one **fear** now was that he would **fail** to get off.

félelem elmulaszt

"Here," I said, pulling some money out of my pocket, "don't **bother** with the lock. Here's money."

örődik

"Thanks," he said **grab**bing the **roll** of money out of my hand, in his **excitement** he took all that I had, "I'll just have time."

megmarkol // köteg

izgalom

He **sprang** from the train. I saw him through the window, moving toward the waiting-room. He didn't seem going very fast.

leugrott

I waited.

The porters were calling, "All abawd!⁸ All abawd." There was the **clang** of a bell, a **hiss** of **steam**, and in a second the train was off.

csengetés // sistergés // gőz

"Idiot," I thought, "he's missed it" and there was his fifty-dollar suit case lying on the seat.

I waited, looking out of the window and wondering who the man was, any-

way.

Then presently I heard the porter's voice again. He evidently was **guiding** someone through the **car**.

kalauzol vasúti kocsi



He didn't seem going very fast.

"Ah looked all through the kyar9 for it, sah," he was saying.

"I left it in the seat in the car there behind my wife," said the angry voice of a stranger, a well-dressed man who put his head into the door of the compartment.

Then his face, too, **beam**ed all at once felragyog with recognition. But it was not for me.

It was for the fifty-dollar **valise**.

"Ah, there it is," he cried, **seizing** it megragad and carrying it off.

I sank back in dismay. The "old hátrarogy(tam) // döbbenet gang!" Pete's marriage! My grand-mother's death! Great Heavens! And my money! I saw it all; the other man was "making talk," too, and making it with a purpose.

Stung! megvágott
And next time that I fall into talk

with a **casual** stranger in a car, I shall alkalmi not try to be quite so **extraordinarily** rendkívüli módon clever.

Jegyzetek

¹ Pullman: az amerikai George Mortimer Pullman (1831-97) által tervezett hosszú, kényelmesen berendezett, jó rugózású vasúti kocsi

² Jove: Jupiter főisten a római mitológiában

³ Montana: az Amerikai Egyesült Államok egyik északnyugati tagállama

⁴ pound: font (súlymérték, 0,454 kg)

- sah: sir (a szó írása a tájszólás hangzását hivatott visszaadni)
 she: a nőnemű névmás a vonatra utal
- ⁷ tahm: time
- 8 abawd: aboard
- ⁹ kyar: car