

## Aldar Meets the Leprechauns

One late summer morning Aldar Sigurdsson was sitting under a small tree outside of town. He was playing the new flute that he purchased on a recent trip to Reykjavik. This would not have been unusual except for the fact that Aldar was an elf. For good reasons, elves rarely ventured near human villages. However, as a bold young adult elf, Aldar was less worried about being discovered than an older elf might be. As long as he dressed like a human and made sure that his pointed ears were covered, he looked much like a cute, blue eyed ten year old boy with exceptionally rosy cheeks.

When Aldar finished playing his flute piece, he heard a strange squawking sound. He looked up and saw a most unusual sight. Coming over the crest of a hill were a group of nine elves. The two lead elves were sniffing the ground, just as if they were dogs following a scent. Another elf who seemed younger and somewhat muscular was pulling a cart loaded so high that it looked as if it could easily tip over. A small boy was skipping in back of the cart. Two women were walking behind him. One of them carried an infant in a backpack and was clutching the hands of two little red headed girls who looked about the same age. They all were dressed in dark green. The men wore top hats with what looked like belt buckles on them, the likes of which Aldar had never seen.

Aldar got up and started walking toward them. He could now see the contents of the cart a little better. On the bottom were several suitcases on top of which were a table and some chairs. An oddly shaped mirror cushioned by pillows stuck out of one

side of the cart. He spotted a sewing machine, a grandfather's clock, an accordion, and lots of pots and pans. Balance on top of all this was a cage containing a large green bird which squawked every time the cart hit a bump. One of the travelers saw him, pointed and yelled something in a foreign language. They jumped and up and down with excitement. The two men in the lead who had been doing the sniffing grabbed Aldar's hands and started dancing in a circle with him. They called out to the young man pulling the cart, who came over and joined the dance. The dancing continued until Aldar almost feel over from dizziness. Attempting to catch his breath, Aldar asked in Icelandic, "What is your name?"

"Cad is ainm duit?" was the question returned by one of them.

Aldar realized that these strange elves must be travelers from a foreign country, but he had no idea where they could have come from.

"Do you happen to speak English?" asked Aldar, who like all Iceland elves as well as humans learn both English and Icelandic in school.

The older elf replied, "Sure'en we do me lad. We were speaking Irish Gaelic, the original language in Ireland. Today most people there speak English. We Irish elves prefer the old language, but most of us speak both. Me family is a wee bit better at English than me self. What I had asked yee in Irish was what your name might be."

Aldar laughed, "That is just what I asked you in Icelandic. By the way, what is your name?"

In the background Aldar heard in a high pitched voice rapidly say, "What is your name, what is your name, what is your name?" Aldar looked around perplexed.

“That be our parrot, Teagan. The name means beautiful in Irish. She is a beauty, don’t yee think?”

“Yes. You really have lovely birds in Ireland,” said Aldar.

“No, me lad. She not be from Ireland. Parrots come from much warmer climates. Teagan here just flew to our house one day. She must have liked us ‘cause she never left. I think she must ‘ave been someone’s pet and probably was mistreated, poor thing. She be thin and missing many feathers when she first came to us.”

“What is your name, what is your name?” Teagan repeated.

Aldar looked at the parrot said, “My name is Aldar.”

“Aldar, Aldar, Aldar,” repeated the bird.

Everyone laughed.

The older Irish elf then said, “Glad to meet yee Aldar. Me name be Callahan, this be me brother Seamus, and this be me son Connor.” As the rest of the group approached, Callahan introduced them, “This be me wife, Ina, and this be Melva, who is Seamus’s wife. ”

“And I am the proud father of all the wee ones,” announced Seamus with obvious pride. “They are five-year old Bartley, our three year old twins Nora and Nola, and our baby Darcy,” said Seamus who was a bit younger than Callahan and spoke English without an accent. “We are a family of leprechauns who have traveled here from Ireland.”

“I am happy to meet such a group of merry elves. Do you dance like that whenever you met someone new, or is it just my special charm?” asked Aldar with a smile.

“Charming you are me lad, but we danced ‘cause we’ve finally found the Iceland elves. We had many hard days of travel. We had thought that we would never find yee, ‘til me brother, Seamus, here picked up yer scent.”

“Do we smell that bad?” Aldar kidded.

“No, no, me lad. You actually smell quiet nice. We leprechauns are blessed with a sense of smell far better than any other elves. Once we landed in Iceland, it took us a long, long time to find any elf smells. Most of those we followed just seem to disappear. Good fortune smiled on us, ‘cause finally we found a trail that lead us this way. I assume there be an elf village nearby.”

“Our lovely town of Elvesvik is only a short walk from here,” said Aldar. “I will be happy to lead you to our fine village, so that you wouldn’t have to smell your way there,” Aldar chuckled.

“Good. We be rather hungry. Could there be a nice pub nearby?” ask Callahan in a musical tone. Aldar had never seen leprechauns before. Leprechauns are actually elves, but through many centuries of separation from other elf groups, they have taken on some different characteristics. Although good looking, they have slightly larger ears, which gives them acute hearing, and slightly longer and somewhat pointed noses, which gives them their extraordinary sense of smell.