

Д.И.ГРИГОРОВИЧ

РЫБАКИ
(отрывок)

Сумрачное расположение Глеба прошло, по-видимому, вместе с половодьем; первый «улов» был такого рода, что нужно было только благодарить господина за его милость. Знатно «отрыбились»!

– Бог сотворил рожденье, благословил нас; нам благодарить его, – а как благодарить? Знамо, молитвой да трудами. Бог труды любит! Ну, ребята, что ж вы стали! Живо! Ночи теперь не зимние, от зари до зари не велик час... пошевеливайся!..

Все это говорил Глеб вечером, на другой день после того, как река улеглась окончательно в берега свои. Солнце уже давно село. Звезды блистали на небе. Рыбаки стояли на берегу и окружали отца, который приготовлялся уехать с ними на реку «лучить» рыбу.

– Ладно, так!.. Ну, Ванюшка, беги теперь в избу, носи огонь! – крикнул Глеб, укрепив на носу большой лодки козу – род грубой железной жаровни, и положив в козу несколько кусков смолы. – Невод свое дело сделал: сослужил службу! – продолжал он, осматривая конец остроги – железной заостренной стрелы, которой накальвают рыбу, подплывающую на огонь. – Надо теперь с лучом поехать... Что-то он пошлет? Сдается по всему, площадь не с чего: ночь тиха –

D. GRIGOROVITCH

THE FISHERMAN
(excerpt)

Translated by Beatrix L. Tollemache

The flood had now driven away gloom from Gleb's countenance, and the first catch of fish was so good that they could only be grateful to God for His gifts. Their luck had indeed been astonishing.

“God is the Creator,” said Gleb. “He has blessed us, and we must show our gratitude. And how? by prayer and by labour. God means us to labour. Now, boys, what are you waiting for? Make haste; we have no more the long winter nights, a summer night is but an hour, so bestir yourselves.”

This was said in the evening, the day after the river had sunk to its usual level. The sun had long set, the stars were shining. The young men stood on the shore round their father, who was preparing for torchlight fishing.

“Now, Vanushka, run to the house and bring the torch,” cried Gleb, as he fixed a rough iron grating on the bow of the boat, and put some pitch on it. “The net has done its work a good servant; now we must use the torch, we must neglect nothing which can help us. The night is still; we could not have a better.” As he said this he examined the point of the spear

D. GREGOROVITSH

THE FISHERMEN
(excerpt)

Translated by Angelo S. Rappoport

Glyeb's glum mood seemed to have disappeared, together with the flood. The results of the first fishing were such as to make him thank his God for His blessings. They were really splendid.

“God has blessed us with His gifts. We must thank Him for them by prayers and hard work. God loves hard work. Now then, get a move on you; this isn't winter, it is time to work.”

Glyeb said this on the evening of the day following that on which the river had finally settled down within its usual confines. The sun had long ago set; the stars were shining in the sky. The young fishermen stood around their father on the bank, all preparing to begin luring the fish by light.

“Now then, Vania, run to the house and bring the light,” shouted Glyeb, fixing a long torch on the bow of his boat. “The nets have done their work well,” he continued, examining one end of the net. “Now we must see what we can do with the harpoons.”

Vania soon reappeared with a lantern in his hands. Soon the tar began cracking and the torch

лучше и требовать нельзя!

Ванюша не замедлил явиться, держа под полою фонарь с зажженным огарком; немного погода смола затрещала, и коза вспыхнула ярким пламенем. Нижняя часть площадки, лица рыбаков и лодки окрасились вдруг багровым трепетным заревом.

– Ну, батя, говори, как размещаться? – произнес Петр.

– Вот как, – проворно подхватил Глеб, который окончательно уже повеселел и расхохотался, – ты, Петрушка, становись со мною на носу с острогою... ладно! Смотри только, не зевай... Гришка и Ванюшка, садись в греблю... живо за весла; да грести у меня тогда только, когда скажу; рыбка спит; тревожить ее незачем до времени... Крепко ли привязан к корме челнок?

Гришка отвечал утвердительно.

– Ну, поворачивайся... так!.. Ты, Вася, – продолжал старик, обращаясь ко второму сыну, который держал лодку крючком багра, – ты на корму. Ну, все мы на местах?

– Все, – отозвались рыбаки в один голос.

– Тсс!.. Мотри, не горланить: говори тайком – одними глазами говори... Отдай!

Василий бросил багор и проворно прыгнул на корму.

– Ну, пущена лодочка на воду, отдана богу на руки! – весело воскликнул Глеб, когда лодка, отчаленная веслами от берега, пошла по течению.

Тетка Анна и снохи ее сидели в это время на

with which he was going to strike the fish attracted by the light.

Vanushka soon appeared carrying a lighted lantern under his coat; soon the pitch began to burn, and threw a bright light round, which lit up the landing place and the faces of the fishermen with a ruddy glare.

“Now, father,” said Peter, “how shall we divide the work?”

Gleb, now quite cheerful, promptly answered:

“You, Peter, stay by me in the bow with your spear; now don't begin to yawn. . . . You, Grishka and Vanushka, sit at the oars, but only row when I tell you. The fish are asleep; we must not disturb them till the moment comes. Is the skiff fastened securely to the stern?”

Grishka said it was. “Now hurry up, you, Vashka,” he turned to his second son who was holding the boat with his boat-hook, “Go to the stern. Now, are we all in our places?”

“All,” answered the young men together.

“Hush! Don't shout, speak with your eyes; talk in a whisper. Off give way.” Basil let go the hook and jumped into the stern. “Now the boat is off and we are in God's hand,” cried Gleb gaily, as the boat pushing from the shore got into the current of the stream.

Meanwhile Aunt Anna and the daughters-in-law sat on the bank and watched the light which burnt brightly in the dark night, and was

on the bow of the boat lit up brilliantly. The red light showed up the faces of the fishermen and flickered over the boats.

“Well, father, where shall we sit?” asked Peter.

“I'll show you,” briskly answered Glyeb, who had become quite merry and jolly again. “You, Peter, shall sit with me in the bow with the harpoons and keep a sharp look out. You, Grishka and Vania, will row, only don't row unless I tell you to. The fish are asleep and must not be disturbed before the time. Is the dinghy fastened all right?”

Grishka nodded his assent.

“Now then, get a move on you. You, Vassili, sit in the stern,” he continued, addressing the second son who held the boat with the boat-hook. “Now, are you all ready?”

“Aye, ready,” answered the younger fishermen in unison.

“Sh! Don't shout! Speak low; answer me with your eyes only. Now go.”

Vassili pushed off with the boat-hook and jumped into the stern.

“Well, now we are on the water, we are at God's mercy!” cheerfully exclaimed Glyeb as the boat left the bank and went down the stream.

Meanwhile Aunt Anna and her daughters-in-law were sitting on the bench in front of the house. They did not remove their gaze from the light which shone so brightly in the darkness of

завалинке. Они не отрывали глаз от «луча», который ярко горел посреди ночи и так отчетливо повторялся в воде, окутанной темнотою наравне с лугами и ближним берегом, что издали казалось, будто два огненных глаза смотрели из глубины реки. Иногда свет исчезал, и вместе с ним мгновенно пропадали лодка, привязанный к ней челнок и люди, на ней находившиеся; но это продолжалось всего одну секунду. Новые куски смолы попадали в козу, и красное пламя, раздвоившись мгновенно, снова загоралось на реке. Тогда перед глазами баб, сидевших на завалинке, снова обозначались дрожащие очертания рыбаков и лодки, снова выступали из мрака высокие фигуры Петра и Глеба Савинова, которые стояли на носу и, приподняв над голову правую руку, вооруженную острогою, перегнувшись корпусом через борт, казались висевшими над водою, отражавшею багровый круг света.

Глеб не ошибся: луч отличился ничем не хуже невода. К полуночи в лодке оказалось немало щук, шересперов и других рыб. Ловля подходила уже к концу, когда Гришка обратился неожиданно к Глебу.

so clearly reflected in the water that it seemed as if two fiery eyes gleamed from the depth of the river, while the meadows and nearer shore were wrapped in gloom. Sometimes for a moment the light disappeared, and with it vanished the boat, the skiff fastened to it, and the fishermen. But fresh pieces of pitch were put on the grating, and the red flame leaped up again over the river. Then the watching women saw again revealed out of the gloom the moving outlines of the boats and the fishermen, the tall figures of Peter and Gleb with spears in their upraised right hands, bending over the edge of the boat and the lighted circle repeated in the river.

Gleb was right; the torchlight fishing was as successful as that with the net.

the night and reflected itself in the water. They looked like two fiery eyes of the river, flashing in the distance. Now and then the light would disappear and with it the boat, the dinghy, and the men in the boat. But that would only be for a second. Soon new torches would be lit in the bow of the boat and then the river would again be lit up by the flaring light. Then the women sitting on the bench would again see the tall silhouettes of Peter and Glyeb who stood up in the boat, holding the harpoons in their raised right hands and bending slightly forward over the side of the boat. In the red light of the torch they appeared to be hanging over the water.

Glyeb was right; the fishing by light was as good as the netting had been. By midnight they had caught a large number of pike, chub, and other fish.