

# ***Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh***

**le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk)\**

Tha dealbh agam, aig an taigh, dhen ghille agam air beulaibh taigh-òsda ann am baile beag anns an Fhraing. 'S e an rud a thog m' aire mun taigh-òsda seo an t-ainm a bh' air – Hotel Amadan.

'S dòcha gur e “amadan” a chanadh na Frangaich; chan eil fhios a'm. Ach dhomhsa mar Ghaidheal, 's e “amadan” a bh' ann agus, mar a thuigeas tu, bha an gille agam a' dèanamh gàire nuair a thog mi dealbh dheth leis a' chamara. Bha mi ag ràdh ris gum b' esan an duine a b' fheàrr anns an teaghlach a rachadh anns an dealbh, leis na bha sgrìobhte air an t-sanas, ach chan eil mi cinnteach an robh e fhèin ag aontachadh!

Nochdaidh am facal *amadan* tric is minig ann an sean-fhaclan. Mar eisimpleir, canaidh daoine mu amadan – “bhiodh meas duine ghlic air nam biodh e na thosd.” Tha fhios gu bheil mòran firinne ann a sin. Ach, air an làimh eile, tha sean-fhacal eile ann a tha a' toirt sealladh eadar-dhealaichte air a' chùis – “is minig a thàinig comhairle ghlic à ceann amadain.”

Bha mi shuas air na beanntan o chionn ghoirid, agus chunnaic mi grunn amadan. Nise, mura h-eil sibh measail air coiseachd nam beann, 's dòcha gu bheil sibh a' smaoinichadh gum faca mi luchd-coiseachd eile! Uill, feumaidh mi ràdh nach fhaca! Leis an fhirinn innse, far an robh mi, chan fhaca mi duine eile, ach a-mhàin mo chompanach, airson dà latha.

Ach bha na h-amadain ann! Bidh sibh a' tuigsinn nach e daoine a bha anns na h-amadain sin, ach beathaichean – eòin. Tha mi a' bruidhinn air an *amadan-mòintich* – eun beag brèagha a tha ri fhaicinn air mullaichean àrda beanntan na h-Alba as t-samhradh agus as t-fhoghar gach bliadhna. Ann am Beurla, 's e *dotterel* a chanas daoine ris.

Cha chreid mi gu bheil fios le cinnt aig duine an-diugh carson is e *amadan-mòintich* a chur ar sinnsearan air an eun seo mar ainm. Chuala mi diofar bheachdan, ge-tà. Thuir aon duine rium gur e an dòigh sa bheil an t-eun seo a' gluasad is coireach, agus e a' coimhead rudeigin neònach. Agus leugh mi ann an leabhar gur e is coireach gu bheil an t-eun sìmplidh is neo-amharasach, is gu bheil e furasta ghlacadh.

Tha sin fìor gu ìre, agus chaidh cron mòr a dhèanamh air an amadan-mòintich anns an ùine a dh'fhalbh le daoine a bha ag iarraidh an itean airson cuileagan-iasgaich a dhèanamh. Chan eil iad idir cho pailt 's a b' àbhaist ach, gu fortanach, tha gu leòr fhathast a' neadachadh air beanntan na Gaidhealtachd, co-dhiù air tìr-mòr na Gaidhealtachd.

Bidh iad a' cladhach lag beag far am fàg a' chearc a cuid uighean. Agus tha i an uairsin gan trèigsinn. 'S e sin an obair aice dèante agus cha ghabh i tuilleadh ghnòthaich ris na h-uighean. 'S e an coileach a tha a' dèanamh a' chòrr, le bhith na shuidhe air na h-uighean gus an tig iad gu ìre. 'S e e fhèin a tha gan "gur", mar a chanas sin. 'S dòcha gur e an coileach an t-amadan, co aige tha fios!

A bheil cuimhn' agaibh air Litir seachd ar fhichead (27) air an naoidheamh latha deug dhen t-Samhain an-uiridh? Dh'innis mi dhuibh an uairsin mun ainm Beurla air eun a thàinig bhon Chuimris – am *penguin*. Uill, tha dà eun ann le ainmean ann am Beurla a thàinig bhon Ghàidhlig, agus tha iad le chèile a' fuireach faisg air àiteachan far a bheil amadain-mhòintich a' neadachadh. A bheil fios agaibh dè th' annta? Innsidh mi dhuibh an ath sheachdain.

\* \* \*

**Faclan na seachdainne:** taigh-òsda: *hotel*; amadan: *a fool*; gàire: *smile*; ag aontachadh: *agreeing*; amadan-mòintich: *dotterel*; itean: *feathers*; cuileagan-iasgaich: *fishing flies*; a' neadachadh: *nesting*; a' trèigsinn: *forsaking*.

**Abairtean na seachdainne:** tha dealbh agam dhen ghille agam: *I have a picture of my son*; 's e an rud a thog m' aire...: *the thing that captured my attention was...*; gum b' esan an duine a b' fheàrr a rachadh anns an dealbh: *that he was the best person to (who would) go in the photograph*; tric is minig: *very frequently*; bhiodh meas duine ghlic air nam biodh e na thosd: *he would be considered a wise man if he kept quiet*; air an làimh eile: *on the other hand*; ach a-mhàin mo chompanach: *except for my companion*; gur e is coireach gu bheil an t-eun sìmplidh is neo-amharasach: *that the bird is simple and unsuspecting*; chaidh cron mòr a dheanamh air X: *X was badly damaged (ie the population fell dramatically)*; chan eil iad idir cho pailt 's a b' àbhaist: *they are not nearly as numerous as they used to be*; bidh iad a' cladhach lag beag: *they dig a small depression*; far am fàg a' chearc a cuid uighean: *where the hen (female bird) leaves her eggs*; cha ghabh i tuilleadh ghnòthaich ri X: *she will have nothing more to do with X*; 's e e fhèin a tha gan gur: *it is he who incubates them*; air an naoidheamh latha deug dhen t-Samhain; *on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November*.

**Puing ghràmair na seachdainne:** tha fhios gu bheil mòran firinne ann a sin: *it is certain that there is much truth in that. If you use mòran to qualify a following noun, that noun is in the genitive case. This is because we are saying much "of the truth", even though the "of" is not explicit in English. The same applies to beagan (little). Note also that in the case of the genitive plural, the noun is lenited. Here are some examples: tha mòran obrach aige ri dhèanamh (he has much work to do); tha mòran feòla aice (she has much meat); tha mòran thogalaichean aca (they have many buildings); tha beagan ciùil annta fhathast (they have a little music in them still); tha beagan gliocais aige (he has a little wisdom); tha beagan Ghaidheal air fhàgail an seo (there are a few Gaels left here). Do you have a copy of the small white dictionary called "Abair" by R W Renton and J A MacDonald (Mingulay Publications)? It is very handy for learners as it tells you whether a word like "mòran" is followed by a special grammatical case, such as the genitive. It is a very useful addition to any Gaelic library.*

**Sean-fhacal na seachdainne:** is minig a thàinig comhairle ghlic à ceann amadain: *it is often that wise counsel came from a fool's head. A useful riposte if anybody ever calls you an "amadan"!*

\* "Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh" is funded by Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig