

# **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 [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk) \**

Bha sinn ann an Canada an t-seachdain sa chaidh agus 'sann ann a sin a tha sinn a' fuireach an t-seachdain-sa. Mar a bhios fios agaibh chaidh na h-uibhir de Ghaidheil a dh'fhuireach thall agus, ann an àiteachan mar Eilean Cheap Bhreatainn, bha an cànan agus an cultar gu math làidir.

Bha sgeulaichean gu leòr ann agus, nam measg, bha Eòs Nìll Bhig, no Joe Neil MacNeil, a bhuineadh don Rubha Mheadhanach. Chaidh a thogail le seann chàraid, nach bruidhneadh ach Gàidhlig aig an taigh. Gu dearbh, cha robh Beurla idir aig an t-seann bhean. Bha Eòs ann an suidheachadh cho Gaidhealach ri duine sam bith anns “an t-seann dùthaich”.

Tha mòran de na sgeulachdan aige ann a leabhar a rinneadh leis an sgoilear Ghàidhlig, Iain Seathach. Bha “Sgeul gu Latha”, air fhoillseachadh le Oilthigh Dhùn Eideann, agus tha e air leth math. Tha a' Bheurla ann a bharrachd air a' Ghàidhlig is tha e feumail mar sin do luchd-ionnsachaidh. Bu mhath leam blasad beag a thoirt dhuibh de thè aca, ged a tha i nas fheàrr aig Eòs na tha i agam an seo, oir rinn mi na bu ghiorra agus na bu shìmplidh' i.

Chaidh balach òg gu taigh a bha seo, agus bha nighean bheag na laighe anns a' chreathail. Bha i a' rànaich is a' caoineadh agus thuir am balach nam faigheadh e a leithid de bhoireannach mar bhean, nuair a thigeadh e gu aois, gum bàthadh e e fhèin. Bha seann bhoireannach an làthair agus thuir i ris, “Coma leat, a laochain. 'S dòcha gur i an tè seo a phòsas tu fhathast.”

Dh'fhàs iad suas anns an aon choimhearsnachd agus cha robh an gille toilichte mu na thuir an seann bhoireannach. Là a bha seo, bha e fhèin is an nighean a' coiseachd còmhla thar drochaid. Thug e fàinne a-mach as a phòcaid. Sheall e am fàinne don nighinn agus thilg e anns an abhainn e. “Na faiceam d' aodann tuilleadh,” thuir e rithe, “gus am bi am fàinne agad dhomh.”

Dh'fhalbh esan a dh'fhuireach ann am badeigin eile, agus dh'fhalbh ise a dh'obair ann am muinntireas do theaghlach faisg air loch no abhainn. Ghlac iad iasg là a bha seo agus bha aice ri dheiseileachadh airson na dinnearach. Agus dè lorg i na bhroinn, ach am fàinne.

Chum i sàbhailte e agus, là a bha seo, thàinig an duine a thilg anns an abhainn e don taigh. Nuair a chunnaic i e a' tighinn a dh'ionnsaigh an dorais, theich i don t-seòmar aice. Nuair a bha an duine a' còmhradh, thuir fear an taighe ris gu robh a' bhan-òglach air teicheadh nuair a chunnaic i e. “Seadh,” ars' an duine, “am biodh e gu diofar ged a chithinn i?” “Cha bhitheadh,” ars' am fear eile, “tha i anns an t-seòmar sin shìos.”

Nuair a chaidh an duine sìos, dh'aithnich e am boireannach. “Tha mi a’ creidsinn,” thuirt e, “gun do dh’iarr mi ort gun d’ aodann a nochdadh rium gus am biodh am fàinne agad. Agus cha do dh’fhalaich thu d’ aodann.”

“O,” ars’ ise, “theirig a-null agus fosgail an dràthair beag. Tòg a’ chisteag bheag às agus thoir dhomh an neapaigin a tha na broinn. Bidh fios agad an uairsin mar a tha cùisean a’ dol.”

Nuair a chaidh an neapaigin fhosgladh bha am fàinne ann, agus dh’aithnich an duine e. “Tha mi a’ faicinn a-nist,” ars’ esan, “nach eil dòigh againn air dealachadh.” Thachair na bha an dàn don dithis agus, goirid as dèidh sin, phòs iad. Bha saoghal fada aighearach aca còmhla.

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**Faclan na seachdaine:** na h-uibhir: *a large number*; sgeulaichean: *storytellers*; seann chàraid: *an old couple*; an làthair: *present*; fàinne: *ring*; muinntireas: *domestic service*; na bhroinn: *inside it (masc.)*; theich i: *she fled*; ban-òglach: *maidservant*; dh’aithnich e: *he recognised*; cisteag: *little chest, box (eg for keepsakes)*; neapaigin: *handkerchief*; na broinn: *inside it (fem.)*; a-nist: *now (equivalent to a-nis)*; phòs iad: *they married*.

**Abairtean na seachdaine:** ’s ann ann a sin a tha sinn a’ fuireach an t-seachdain-sa: *it’s there that we are staying this week*; a bhuineadh don Rubha Mheadhanach: *who belonged to Middle Cape*; nach bruidhneadh ach Gàidhlig aig an taigh: *who only spoke Gaelic in the home*; ann an leabhar a rinneadh leis an sgoilear Ghàidhlig, Iain Seathach: *in a book compiled by the Gaelic scholar, John Shaw*; air fhoillseachadh le Oilthigh Dhùn Eideann: *published by Edinburgh University Press*; tha e air leth math: *it is excellent*; bu mhath leam blasad beag a thoirt dhuibh de thè aca: *I would like to give you a little taste of one (fem.) of them*; na bu ghiorra is na bu shìmplidh’: *shorter and simplified*; bha i a’ rànaich is a’ caoineadh: *she was wailing and weeping*; gum bàthadh e e fhèin: *that he would drown himself*; coma leat, a laochain: *don’t worry, lad*; bha aice ri dheiseileachadh: *she had to prepare it (masc.)*; tha i anns an t-seòmair sin shìos: *she’s in that room down there*; gun d’ aodann a nochdadh rium gus am biodh am fàinne agad: *not to show me your face until you had the ring*; theirig a-null agus fosgail an dràthair: *go over and open the drawer*; thachair na bha an dàn don dithis: *the two of them achieved their destiny*; bha saoghal fada aighearach aca còmhla: *they had a long happy life together*.

**Puing-ghràmar na seachdaine:** na faiceam d’ aodann tuilleadh gus am bi am fàinne agad dhomh: *don’t let me see your face againn until you have the ring for me. The –(e)am ending of faiceam is a virtual give-away that this construction is a first-person singular of a verb in the imperative mood. You will be familiar with this mood in the second person eg singular faic! (see!) and plural faicibh! (see!). It is less common in the other persons but here they are, for the verb “faic”:* faiceam (*let me see*), faiceadh e (*let him see*), faiceadh i (*let her see*), faiceamaid (*let us see*), faiceadh iad (*let them see*). *The imperative forms are usually built around the root of the verb (equivalent to the second personal singular imperative), in this case faic. Let us consider another verb – dèan (do,make): we say dèan seo for “do this” so dèan is the root. Thus the imperative forms are as follows: dèanam (let me do), dèan (do), dèanadh e, i (let him, her do), dèanamaid (let us do), dèanaibh (do), dèanadh iad (let them do) – eg dèanadh iad na thogras iad (let them do what they want).*

**Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine:** am biodh e gu diofar ged a chithinn i?: *would you mind if I saw her?*

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