

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.macleam@bbc.co.uk **

Tha beagan fiosrachaidh agam an seo a dh’fhaodadh duine agaibh a dhèanamh beartach. Leis an fhìrinn innse, chan eil mi cinnteach co-dhiù bu chòir dhomh a thoirt seachad oir dh’fhaodainn a bhith beartach mi-fhìn! ’S e a th’ ann abairt à beul-aithris Siorrachd Rois, is tha e a’ dol mar seo: Fichead slat bho Leac a’ Bhealaich, tha seiche searraich làn òir. Canaidh mi sin a-rithist: Fichead slat bho Leac a’ Bhealaich, tha seiche searraich làn òir.

Uill, ’s dòcha nach eil an t-seiche ann tuilleadh, oir bidh a leithid a’ lobhadh tro thìde. Ach ma tha e fìor, bu chòir don òr a bhith ann fhathast.

Nise, mus ruith sibh airson ur mapaichean, chan eil mi a’ dol a dh’innse dhuibh gu mionaideach cà’ bheil Leac a’ Bhealaich. Oir chan eil fios agam air a sin gu mionaideach. Ach innsidh mi seo dhuibh: tha i faisg air Loch a’ Bhraoin ann am Frìth a’ Bhràigh Mhòir gu deas air Ulapul. Loch a’ Bhraoin – *loch of the drizzle*. Chunnaic mise air là teth grianach e. Ach, ma tha sibh eòlach air an sgìre ann an droch aimsir, tuigidh sibh, ’s dòcha, mar a fhuair e ainm.

’S e fear de na lochan faisg air làimh, a tha ri taobh an rathaid mhòir eadar Ulapul agus Inbhir Nis, Loch Droma. Gu tuath air an loch air taobh thall an rathaid bhuaithe tha Meall Leacachain. Agus aig bonn a’ mhill, tha Leathad Leacachain. Faisg air a seo o chionn fhada thachair rudeigin glè annasach, ma ghabhas stòiridh à beul-aithris na sgìre creidsinn. Chaidh an stòiridh seo a chruinneachadh bho fhear, Ruairidh MacMhathain, a bha uaireigin a’ fuireach làimh ri Loch a’ Bhraoin.

Air oidhche fhuar aig Leathad Leacachain, thachair duine air boireannach a bha a’ breith leanabh, agus i air an rathad eadar dà bhaile. Bha i ann an cunnart bàsachadh leis an fhuachd. Dè, ma-thà, a bha an duine a’ dol a dhèanamh airson am boireannach is a leanabh a shàbhaladh? Uill, rinn e rud annasach, a rèir na sgeòil. Cha robh anns an nàbaidheachd ach aon rud far an robh fasnadh is blàths – each. Chan urrainn dhomh ràdh co-dhiù ’s ann leis an duine fhèin a bha an t-each gus nach ann.

Ach mharbh e an t-each, agus thug e a’ ghreallach às. A bheil sibh eòlach air an fhacal sin – greallach? Tha e air a dhol a-steach don Bheurla, an dà chuid mar ainmear agus gnìomhair. Canaidh daoine “I gralloched a deer”, a’ ciallachadh gun tug e am mionach, no a’ ghreallach, às an fhiadh.

Co-dhiù, bha closach an eich blàth, agus chuir an duine am boireannach agus a leanabh na broinn airson an cumail sàbhailte. Agus mhair iad beò air sàilleamh na rinn e dhaibh.

Chaidh na bliadhnaichean seachad, agus bha an Rosach a bha seo ann an Dùn Eideann. Bha e a’ dol seachad air taighean nuair a chuala e boireannach aig uinneag gu h-àrd, agus i a’ bruidhinn ri t’ eile. “Tha i fuar,” thuirt an dàrna tè. “Tha,” fhreagair an t’ eile, “ach chan eil i cho fuar ri Leathad Leacachain.”

Dh’aithnich an duine an t-ainm agus ghlaodhaich e suas, a’ faighneachd dhen boireannach gu dè am fios a bh’ aice air Leathad Leacachain. “Uill,” ars’ ise, “rugadh mi

ann.” Bha fios aig an duine gu robh e a’ bruidhinn ris an leanabh a shabhail e air an oidhche fhuair a bha sin, agus i a-nise na boireannach. Bha iad gu math toilichte eòlas a chur air a chèile mu dheireadh thall.

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Faclan na seachdaine: dh’fhaodainn: *I could be*; fichead slat: *20 yards*; gu mionaideach: *precisely, in detail*; Frìth a’ Bhràigh Mhòir: *the Braemore Forest (a “deer forest” is frìth – it does not have trees)*; annasach: *unusual*; closach: *carcass*; mionach: *intestines, guts*; na broinn: *inside it (fem)*; Rosach: *Ross-shire man*; mu dheireadh thall: *at long last*.

Abairtean na seachdaine: a dh’fhaodadh duine agaibh a dhèanamh beartach: *which could make one of you rich*; co-dhiù bu chòir dhomh a thoirt seachad: *whether I should give it out (the information)*; seiche searraich làn òir: *a foal’s skin full of gold*; bidh X a’ lobhadh tro thìde: *X will rot eventually*; air taobh thall an rathaid bhuaithe: *on the other side of the road from it*; aig bonn a’ mhill: *at the base of the meall (hill)*; ma ghabhas stòiridh à beul-aithris na sgìre creidsinn: *if a story from the area’s oral tradition can be believed*; chaidh an stòiridh a chruinneachadh: *the story was collected*; bha i ann an cunnart bàsachadh: *she was in danger of dying*; a rèir na sgeòil: *according to the story*; far an robh fàsgadh is blàths: *where there was shelter and warmth*; thug e a’ ghreallach às: *he gralloched it (took the intestines out)*; air sàilleamh na rinn e dhaibh: *because of what he did for them*; dh’aithnich an duine an t-ainm: *the man recognised the name*; rugadh mi ann: *I was born there*; agus i a-nise na boireannach: *who was now a woman*; eòlas a chur air a chèile: *to get to know each other*.

Puing-ghràmar na seachdaine: co-dhiù ’s ann leis an duine fhèin a bha an t-each gus nach ann: *whether or not the horse belonged to the man himself. The construction of co-dhiù ... gus nach is a very useful one and I want to make two observations about it. Firstly, it is the affirmative form of the verb which is used first, not the interrogative eg co-dhiù bha e deiseil gus nach robh (whether he was ready or not). We use bha here and we don’t say co-dhiù an robh e deiseil... Secondly, the verbal form coming after gus nach reflects the first verbal form. If it is co-dhiù bha... then we will say gus nach robh. If it is co-dhiù ’s ann..., we will say gus nach ann; if it is co-dhiù bhiodh e ... we will say gus nach bitheadh (using the emphatic form of biodh) etc. Here are some other examples so you can see how the second verb follows the first: co-dhiù bidh e ann gus nach bi (whether he will there or not); co-dhiù nì i an obair gus nach dèan (whether she does the work or not); co-dhiù ’s e àm freagarrach a bh’ ann gus nach e (whether or not it was a suitable time).*

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine: thachair duine air boireannach a bha a’ breith leanabh: *a man happened upon a woman who was giving birth to a child. Thachair X air Y: X happened upon, met by chance with, Y.*

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