

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
* This is Litir 254.*

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Loch mo Nàire ann an Srath Nabhair, is mar a bha mòran dhen bheachd gu robh uisge draoidheil ann. An-diugh, tha mi a’ dol a thoirt cunntas air mar a bhiodh fear a bha tinn a’ dèanamh leigheas air fhèin anns an loch. Bhiodh e a’ dol ann ann an dorchadas na h-oidhche agus, nuair a thigeadh a’ chiad aiteal de sholas an là, chuireadh e a chuid aodaich dheth agus rachadh e don uisge.

Thilgeadh e bonn airgid fad’ a-mach don loch, agus chuireadh e a cheann fodha trì tursan. Agus gach turas, dh’iarradh e air spiorad an uisge faighinn cuidhteas a thinneis. An uair sin, chuireadh e aodach air a-rithist, agus bhiodh e a’ coiseachd gu deiseil timcheall an locha. Dh’fheumadh e an uair sin teicheadh ann an cabhaig. Bha aige ri dèanamh cinnteach gu robh an loch a-mach à sealladh mus biodh a’ ghrian air èirigh.

Fad na h-ùine sin dh’fheumadh e a bhith sàmhach, gun facal a ràdh ach a-mhàin ri spiorad an uisge. Nan leanadh e an dòigh sin, bhiodh cothrom math aige faighinn cuidhteas an tinneis a bha a’ bualadh air, a rèir beul-aithris co-dhiù.

Thathar ag aithris gum biodh na h-uibhir de dhaoine a’ dol gu ruige Loch mo Nàire eadhon tràth anns an fhicheadamh linn, agus gum biodh sluagh mòr mòr ann air a’ chiad Dhiluain dhen Lùnastal gach bliadhna. Thigeadh iad cruinn aig an loch eadar meadhan-oidhche is uair sa mhadainn.

Thathar ag aithris gum bithear a’ lorg buinn airgid anns an loch, is gu bheil iad air am milleadh le uisge searbh an locha. Ach thathar a’ toirt rabhadh do dhaoine gun a bhith a’ toirt nam bonn air falbh. Oir ma nì duine sin, gheibh e fhèin an dearbh thinneas a bh’ air an euslainteach a thilg am bonn don loch anns a’ chiad àite.

Chan eil fhios agam cia mheud duine a tha a’ creidsinn a leithid an-diugh, eadhon anns an sgìre fhèin. Agus tha fhios nach robh a h-uile duine a’ gabhail ris co-dhiù, fiù ’s nuair a bhiodh na ceudan a’ tighinn cruinn air bruach Loch mo Nàire. Seo naidheachd eile às an sgìre a tha a’ sealltainn taobh eile dhen ghnathach.

Bha seann bhoireannach a bha seo a’ fuireach leatha fhèin. Cha robh comas coiseachd aice agus, mar sin, dh’iarr i air balach a b’ aithne dhi dhol don loch as a leth air Là Buidhe Bealltainn, is botal dhen uisge a thoirt air ais dhi. Dh’iarr i air sin a dhèanamh gu sgiobalta, gun a bhith a’ caitheamh ùine air an rathad.

Ach, air an rathad a dh’ionnsaigh an locha, thachair an gille ri balaich eile a b’ aithne dha, is chuir e seachad ùine còmhla riutha. Agus dhìochuimhnich e mun uisge bhon loch. Nuair a chuimhnich e mu dheidhinn, bha am feasgar ann agus bha e air a bhith dorch mus fhaigheadh e ann agus air ais gu taigh na caillich. An àite tilleadh gun uisge sam bith, lion e am botal anns an abhainn, seach anns an loch, agus thug e don bhoireannach e gun guth a ràdh.

Bha i air leth toilichte agus thug i a beannachd dha, oir cha robh càil a dh'fhios aice nach ann bhon loch a thàinig e. Dh'òl i an t-uisge agus, ceart gu leòr, bha deagh shlàinte aice chun an là air an do chaochail i. Agus bha i a' cumail a-mach chun an là sin gum b' e an t-uisge coisrigte sin an aon stuth-leigheis a rinn feum dhi a-riamh!

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Faclan na seachdainne: draoidheil: *magic*; leigheas: *cure*; dorchadas: *darkness*; spiorad an uisge: *the water spirit*; pàganach: *pagan*; teicheadh: *flee, leave*; cabhag: *hurry*; an Lùnastal: *August*; bonn airgid: *silver coin*; Là Buidhe Bealltainn: *Beltane Day (1 May)*; gu sgiobalta: *quickly*; coisrigte: *sacred*.

Abairtean na seachdainne: tha mi a' dol a thoirt cunntas: *I am going to give an account*; chuireadh e a chuid aodaich dheth: *he would take off his clothes*; chuireadh e a cheann fodha: *he would put his head under*; faighinn cuidhteas an thinneis: *to get rid of his illness*; gu deiseil timcheall an locha: *sunwise around the loch*; bha aige ri dèanamh cinnteach: *he had to make sure*; fad na h-ùine sin: *all that time*; eadhon tràth anns an fhicheadamh linn: *even early in the 20th Century*; le uisge searbh an locha: *by the acidic water of the loch*; an dearbh thinneas a bh' air an euslainteach: *the very illness that the sick person suffered from*; dh'iarr i air balach a b' aithne dhi: *she asked a boy she knew*; gun a bhith a' caitheamh ùine: *without wasting time*; dhìochuimhnich e mun uisge: *he forgot about the water*; bha e air a bhith dorch mus fhaigheadh e ann agus air ais: *it would have been dark before he got there and back*; gun guth a ràdh: *without letting on*; chun an là air an do chaochail i: *till the day she died*; an aon stuth-leigheis a rinn feum dhi: *the one curative material which improved her health*.

Puing-ghràmar na seachdainne: Before reading on, I would like you to scrutinise the verbal forms in the fourth and fifth paragraphs and attempt to explain the grammatical form, function and meaning of each. Then check them against my list which follows: Thathar ag aithris (*independent form of present impersonal of verb "to be" – which acts as a passive – followed by verbal noun: it is reported*); gum biodh X a' dol (*dependent form of conditional/past habitual: that X would go*); Thigeadh iad cruinn (*independent form of active conditional/past habitual: they would gather*); gum bithear a' lorg X (*dependent form of future/present habitual impersonal of verb "to be" – which acts a passive – followed by verbal noun: that X would be found*); gu bheil iad air am milleadh (*present passive construction*); gun a bhith a' toirt nam bonn air falbh (*infinitive of verb "to be" and verbal noun followed by definite noun in genitive plural: not to take the coins away*); ma nì duine sin (*independent form of future active: if a person does that*); gheibh e (*independent form of future active: he will get*); a thilg (*independent form of past active: who threw*).

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne: gu robh an loch a-mach à sealladh mus biodh a' ghrian air èirigh: *that the loch was out of sight before the sun rose [would rise]*. A-mach à sealladh (or just à sealladh): *out of sight*.

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