

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 * This is Litir 299.*

An t-seachdain sa chaidh thòisich mi air an sgeulachd thraidiseanta, "Morachan is Mionachan". Sguir sinn mu dheireadh le Morachan ag iarraidh luch.

"Chan fhaigh thu mise," ars' an luch, "mura faigh thu cat a ruitheas mi." Chaidh e far an robh cat. "Cà'il thu a' dol?" dh'fhaighnich an cat. "Tha mi ag iarraidh cat," arsa Morachan, "cat a ruitheas luch, luch a sgròbas ìm, ìm chasan gadhair, gadhar a ruitheas fiadh, fiadh a shnàmhais uisge, uisge a fhliuchas clach, clach a bhleitheas tuagh, tuagh a bhuaineas slat, slat a ghabhas air Mionachan gus nach ith e cus de na cnothan."

"Uill, chan fhaigh thu mise," ars' an cat, "mura faigh thu bainne a dh'òlas mi." Chaidh e far an robh bainne. "Cà'il thu a' dol?" dh'fhaighnich am bainne. "Tha mi ag iarraidh bainne," arsa Morachan, "bainn' a dh'òlas cat, cat a ruitheas luch, luch a sgròbas ìm, ìm chasan gadhair, gadhar a ruitheas fiadh, fiadh a shnàmhais uisge, uisge a fhliuchas clach, clach a bhleitheas tuagh, tuagh a bhuaineas slat, slat a ghabhas air Mionachan gus nach ith e cus de na cnothan."

"Uill, chan fhaigh thu mise," ars' am bainne, "mura faigh thu bò a bhleoghaineas mi." Chaidh e far an robh bò. "Cà'il thu a' dol?" dh'fhaighnich a' bhò. "Tha mi ag iarraidh bò," arsa Morachan, "bò a bhleoghaineas bainne, bainn' a dh'òlas cat, cat a ruitheas luch, luch a sgròbas ìm, ìm chasan gadhair, gadhar a ruitheas fiadh, fiadh a shnàmhais uisge, uisge a fhliuchas clach, clach a bhleitheas tuagh, tuagh a bhuaineas slat, slat a ghabhas air Mionachan gus nach ith e cus de na cnothan."

"Uill, chan fhaigh thu mise," ars' a' bhò, "mura faigh thu sop a dh'itheas mi." Chaidh e far an robh sop. "Cà'il thu a' dol?" dh'fhaighnich an sop. "Tha mi ag iarraidh sop," arsa Morachan, "sop a dh'itheas bò, bò a bhleoghaineas bainne, bainn' a dh'òlas cat, cat a ruitheas luch, luch a sgròbas ìm, ìm chasan gadhair, gadhar a ruitheas fiadh, fiadh a shnàmhais uisge, uisge a fhliuchas clach, clach a bhleitheas tuagh, tuagh a bhuaineas slat, slat a ghabhas air Mionachan gus nach ith e cus de na cnothan."

"Uill, chan fhaigh thu mise," ars' an sop, "mura faigh thu an gille-sabhail." Chaidh e far an robh an gille-sabhail. "Cà'il thu a' dol?" dh'fhaighnich an gille-sabhail. "Tha mi ag iarraidh sop a' ghille-sabhail," arsa Morachan, "sop a dh'itheas bò, bò a bhleoghaineas bainne, bainn' a dh'òlas cat, cat a ruitheas luch, luch a sgròbas ìm, ìm chasan gadhair, gadhar a ruitheas fiadh, fiadh a shnàmhais

uisge, uisge a fhliuchas clach, clach a bhleitheas tuagh, tuagh a bhuaineas slat, slat a ghabhas air Mionachan gus nach ith e cus de na cnothan.”

“Uill, chan fhaigh thu mise,” ars’ an gille-sabhail, “mura faigh thu bonnach a dh’itheas mi.” Dh’fhalbh Morachan a dh’iarraidh bean-fhuine. Thuir e ris a’ bhean-fhuine gun robh e ag iarraidh bonnach bhuaipe a dh’itheadh an gille-sabhail. “Cha dèan mise bonnach dhut,” ars’ a bhean-fhuine, “mura faigh thu uisge a fhliuchas a’ mhin.” Cha robh soitheach aice, ge-tà, a bheireadh an t-uisge dhachaigh bhon loch ach criathar!

Dh’fhalbh Morachan chun an locha a dh’iarraidh an uisge ach, nuair a thog e an criathar bhon loch nach do ruith a h-uile deur uisge troimhe. Chaidh eun seachad air sgèith is thuir e ris, “Suath poll bog ris is cumaidh sin làn e. Suath poll bog ris.”

Ach an do shuath Morachan poll bog ris? Chì sinn an ath-sheachdain nuair a chuireas mi crìoch air an sgeulachd.

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NB: Readers should refer back to the first part of the story published last week.

Faclan na seachdaine: ìm: *butter*; gadhar: *hunting dog*; fiadh: *deer*; tuagh: *axe*; slat: *rod, stick*; bonnach: *cake, bannock*; soitheach: *vessel*.

Abairtean na seachdaine: “Chan fhaigh thu mise,” ars’ an luch: *“You won’t get me,” said the mouse*; mura faigh thu cat a ruitheas mi: *if you don’t find a cat which will chase me*; mura faigh thu bainne a dh’òlas mi: *if you don’t find milk which I can drink*; bò a bhleoghaineas bainne: *a cow which will give milk*; mura faigh thu sop a dh’itheas mi: *if you don’t find a bundle of straw I can eat*; mura faigh thu an gille-sabhail: *if you don’t get the man who works in the barn*; dh’fhalbh Morachan a dh’iarraidh bean-fhuine: *Morachan left to find a baker woman*; gun robh e ag iarraidh bonnach bhuaipe: *that he was wanting a bannock from her*; cha dèan mise bonnach dhut: *I won’t make you a bannock*; uisge a fhliuchas a’ mhin: *water which will moisten the flour*; a bheireadh an t-uisge dhachaigh bhon loch ach criathar: *which would take the water home from the loch but a sieve*; nach do ruith a h-uile deur uisge troimhe: *didn’t every drop of water run through it*; chaidh eun seachad air sgèith: *a bird went past on the wing*.

Puing-chànain na seachdaine: slat a ghabhas air Mionachan gus nach ith e cus de na cnothan: *a rod with which to beat Mionachan so that he doesn’t eat too many of the nuts. The verb gabh (a’ gabhail) is an incredibly useful and flexible one, employed in many idioms, and it is worth giving it some close attention. Colin Mark deals with it comprehensively in his Gaelic-English dictionary (p 318-321), as does Dwelly (p. 466-467). With the preposition air, in this instance, it works as an idiom meaning “to beat, strike, belabour”. Ghabh iad air (they struck him); tha an t-amadan a’ gabhail air fhèin (the fool is hitting himself).*

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine: Suath poll bog ris: *rub soft mud into it*.

* Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinachadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig.