

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 at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk * This is Litir 332. Note that Roddy also broadcasts a simplified version – An Litir Bheag – on Monday evenings at 7.00 pm. This is also available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 28 corresponds to Litir 332.*

Nuair a nochd Tormod MacLeòid mu choinneamh seisean na h-Eaglais cha do ghèill e. Cha do ghèill am ministear, an t-Ollamh Ros, nas mò. Thugadh fichead là do Thormod mus cailleadh e a dhreuchd mar thidsear. Choisich Tormod a-mach às an taigh. Ach cha deach e fada. Bha uisge mòr air a bhith ann fad an là agus bha tuil san abhainn faisg air a’ mhansa. Chan fhaigheadh Tormod a-null. Thàinig an oidhche. Bha Tormod bog fliuch. Cha b’ urrainn dha càil a dhèanamh ach tilleadh don mhansa. Fhuair e a-steach don chidsin gun fhiosta do dhuine agus bha e ann a sin greis. Ach chaidh a lorg le searbhant.

Thug am ministear cuireadh dha tighinn don t-seòmar-shuidhe far an robh e fhèin is a bhean, feadhainn eile, agus fear de na h-èildearan a bh’ air a bhith ga cheasnachadh tron là. **Bha Tormod air a nàrachadh.** Ach cha b’ urrainn dha a bhith mì-mhodhail. Agus chaidh fàilte chridheil a chur air. **Fhuair e cuid oidhche anns a’ mhansa.** Fhad ’s a bha seo a’ tachairt bha a bhean Màiri a’ coiseachd an naoi mìle don abhainn, agus i a’ gabhail dragh nach robh sgeul air an duine aice. Fhuair i fhèin cuid oidhche le nàbaidh a’ mhinistear air taobh eile na h-aibhne bhon mhansa.

Às dèidh fichead là chaidh an sgoil a ghlasadh agus bha làithean Thormoid mar thidsear seachad. Bha e fhèin is Màiri airson ’s gum biodh an leanabh aca, Iain, air a bhaisteadh le Ministear Loch Carrainn, an t-Urramach Lachlan MacCoinnich. Choisich iad ceathrad mìle airson a’ bhaistidh. Ach, nuair a ràinig iad Loch Carrann, fhuair iad a-mach gu robh Mgr MacCoinnich airson ’s gun tigeadh Tormod agus an t-Oll. Ros gu rèite. Thug e còmhla sa mhansa aig’ iad. Ach cha do dh’obraich e. Bha cus droch fhaireachdainn ann eatarra airson tighinn gu còrdadh. Chaidh Tormod is Màiri dhachaigh gun Iain a bhaisteadh.

Thòisich Tormod air beachdachadh air eilthireachd a dhèanamh a dh’Ameireagaidh a Tuath. Ach an toiseach bhiodh aige ris na fiachan a bh’ air a phàigheadh. Chaidh e a dh’Inbhir Ùige airson iasgach. Bha tuarastal math aige ann a sin. Ro dheireadh na bliadhna, bha e air na fiachan gu lèir aige a phàigheadh, agus bha e air gu leòr de dh’airgead a shàbhaladh airson Màiri is Iain fhad ’s a bha esan thall thairis. Anns an Iuchar ochd ceud deug ’s a seachd-deug (1817), sheòl e air a *Frances Ann* a bha a’ dèanamh air Pictou ann an Alba Nuadh.

Bha stoirm mhòr ann fhad ’s a bha iad aig muir agus thòisich an soitheach air uisge a leigeil a-steach. Ged a bha a h-uile fear air bòrd a’ gabhail turas air na pumpaichean, cha robh cùisean a’ dol gu math. Thug an sgiobair a h-uile duine cruinn. Dh’innis e dhaibh gu robh e a’ dol a thilleadh a dh’Èirinn. Bha Tormod gu dubh na aghaidh. Bha esan airson cumail a dol. Chaidh e fhèin is an caiptean a-mach air a chèile, agus a h-uile

duine eile gan coimhead. Mu dheireadh thall, fhuair Tormod taic an luchd-shiubhail airson cumail orra gu ruige Alba Nuadh. Ràinig iad Pictou as t-Sultain.

Fhuair Tormod tac far an robh e trang ann a bhith a' leasachadh na talmhainn. Ach Là na Sàbaid, bhiodh e ri searmonachadh. Cha b' fhada gus an tug e buaidh mhòr air mòran dhen t-sluagh. "Cò th' ann an Tormod [MacLeòid]?" sgrìobh fear. "Tha searmonaiche a dh'èirich air a cheann fhèin a tha a' cumail a-mach nach eil ministear aig Crìosda ann an Eaglais na h-Alba air fad."

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Faclan na Litreach: tuil: *flood*; cuireadh: *invitation*; mì-mhodhail: *bad-mannered*; nàbaidh: *neighbour*; Loch Carrann: *Lochcarron*; tuarastal: *wage*; Alba Nuadh: *Nova Scotia*; tac: *plot of land*.

Abairtean na Litreach: seisean na h-Eaglais: *the kirk session*; cha do ghèill am ministear: *the minister did not submit*; thugadh fichead là do Thormod mus cailleadh e a dhreuchd mar thidsear: *Norman was given twenty days before he would lose his job as a teacher*; chan fhaigheadh e a-null: *he couldn't get over*; gun fhiosta do dhuine: *without anyone knowing*; fear de na h-èildearan a bh' air a bhith ga cheasnachadh: *one of the elders who had been questioning him*; fhad 's a bha seo a' tachairt: *while this was happening*; nach robh sgeul air an duine aice: *that there was no sign of her husband*; gum biodh an leanabh aca air a bhaisteadh: *that their baby would be baptised*; gun tigeadh Tormod agus an t-Oll. Ros gu rèite: *that Norman and Dr. Ross would come to a settlement*; bha cus droch fhaireachdainn ann eatarra: *there was too much bad feeling between them*; gun Iain a bhaisteadh: *without baptising John*; beachdachadh air eilthreachd a dhèanamh: *thinking about emigrating*; bhiodh aige ris na fiachan a bh' air a phàigheadh: *he would have to pay off his debts*; chaidh e a dh'Inbhir Ùige airson iasgach: *he went to Wick for [the] fishing*; bha e air gu leòr de dh'airgead a shàbhaladh: *he had saved enough money*; fhad 's a bha esan thall thairis: *while he was overseas*; a bha a' dèanamh air Pictou: *which was bound for Pictou*; thòisich an soitheach air uisge a leigeil a-steach: *the vessel began to let water in*; chaidh e fhèin is an caiptean a-mach air a chèile: *he and the captain argued vigorously*; fhuair Tormod taic an luchd-shiubhail airson cumail orra: *Norman got the travellers' support for continuing*; a' leasachadh na talmhainn: *developing the land*; searmonaiche a dh'èirich air a cheann fhèin: *a self-made preacher*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Bha Tormod air a nàrachadh: *Norman was ashamed. We would say of Màiri – bha Màiri air a nàrachadh. In the written form there is no difference as we do not indicate a lenited “n” orthographically. But, strictly speaking, the masculine example would have a lenited n following the masculine third person singular possessive article; the feminine would be unlenited. How should a learner deal with such niceties? You could ignore them and you would largely get away with it. But if you are fine tuning your spoken Gaelic, ask a native speaker for assistance. Start with a verb where the “n” is followed by a narrow vowel eg bha e/i air a neartachadh. Here the difference is more obvious. Then try bha e/i air a nàrachadh. Listen very carefully!*
Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: Fhuair e cuid oidhche anns a' mhansa: *he received a night's lodging in the manse. This can also be expressed with cuid na h-oidhche.*

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