

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 381. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 77 corresponds to Litir 381.*

Thairis air na beagan seachdainean a dh’fhalbh, bha mi ag innse sgeulachd ainmeil dhuibh – Deirdre agus Clann Uisne. Uill, bha mi a’ smaoinichadh gun robh an t-àm agam tilleadh do dh’àite faisg air Inbhir Nis a tha co-cheangailte ri Deirdre. ’S e sin Dùn Dearduil faisg air Inbhir Fharragaig ri taobh Loch Nis. Thathar a’ dèanamh dheth gur e Dearduil a chanadh Gàidheil na sgìre sin ri Deirdre o shean. Agus thathar ag ràdh gur ann air an dùn a bha an tùr a thog Naois is Deirdre.

’S e a th’ ann an Dùn Dearduil cnoc àrd cas creagach, le aibhnichean brasa air dà thaobh dheth. Bha daoine a’ fuireach ann ann an Linn an Iarainn. Bha ballachan mòra tiugha gu h-àrd air airson an sluagh a dhìon. Chithear na clachan bhuapa fhathast.

Bha mi ann o chionn beagan bhliadhnaichean agus bha cuimhne agam air coille thiugh aig bonn a’ chnuic. Ach cha robh e uabhasach doirbh an cnoc a dhìreadh. Mar sin, thug mi cuireadh don bhean agam agus do bhana-charaid tighinn cuide rium. Bha mi a’ dol a dh’innse sgeulachd Deirdre dhaibh, agus sinn nar suidhe còmhla air mullach an dùin. Ach gu mì-fhortanach, cha do dh’obraich cùisean mar a bha dùil.

Dh’fheuch sinn ri faighinn tarsainn tè de na h-aibhnichean aig bonn a’ chnuic. Chaidh sinn sìos tron choille. ’S ann an uair sin a chuala sinn fuaim neònach. Bha e àrd àrd mar bheathach ann am pian. No mar bhean-sìthe ag èigheachd. **Bha e ro àrd airson damh, ged is e an Dàmhair a bh’ ann.** Feumaidh mi ràdh gu robh rudeigin mun fhuaim a bha car eagallach.

Co-dhiù, chuir an abhainn stad oirnn. Bha i a’ sruthadh ro luath is bha i ro dhomhainn. Chaidh sinn beagan mhìltean suas an abhainn agus lorg sinn drochaid. Bha rathad ann gu bonn cnuic eile faisg air Dùn Dearduil. ’S e sin an Dùn Garbh. Agus tha e garbh dha-rìreabh. Tha e leacach is creagach is cas, is tha am fraoch àrd is tiugh. Aig amannan bha an raineach trom b’ fheudar dhuinn coiseachd na b’ àirde na sinne.

Eadar an Dùn Garbh is Dùn Dearduil dh’fhàs cùisean na bu mhiosa. Bhathar air a bhith a’ leagail nan craobh nach robh dùthchasach do dh’Alba. Agus tha na craobhan marbha nan laighe far an do thuit iad. B’ fheudar dhuinn dhol thairis orra is fodhpa. Cha robh mi riamh a’ coiseachd ann an àite cho garbh ann

an Alba. B' fheudar dhuinn aig amannan an cù a thogail thairis air na craobhan leagte oir bha e ro bheag airson leum thairis orra. Cù bochd! Tha mi cinnteach gun robh e a' smaoinichadh ris fhèin, "Ciamar fon ghrèin a chaidh mo thaghadh leis an teaghlach seo?!"

Agus 's ann an uair sin, nuair a bha sinn faisg air Dùn Dearduil a-rithist a chuala sinn am fuaim a-rithist. Mar sgreuchail. Àrd, eagallach. Cuideigin ann am pian? Beathach ann an ribe? No taibhs? Carson a thuir mi sin? Uill, innsidh mi dhuibh an ath-sheachdain.

Mu dheireadh ràinig sinn mullach Dhùn Dearduil. Fhuair sinn sealladh àlainn de Loch Nis. Tha am mullach torrach is feurach. 'S e as coireach ri sin na daoine a bha a' fuireach ann. Gu mì-fhortanach, cha robh ùine agam an sgeulachd innse do chàch oir **bha dragh oirnn mun ùine a bheireadh e** faighinn air ais don chàr. Agus cha robh sinn airson a bhith glaiste air an dùn san dorchadas, gun fhiosta dè an creutair a bha a' sgreuchail aig àrd a chinn.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** tiugh: *thick*; dìreadh: *ascending*; domhainn: *deep*; dùthchasach: *native*; garbh: *rough*; leagte: *felled*; ribe: *trap*; taibhs: *ghost*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** thairis air na beagan seachdainean a dh'fhalbh: *over the last few weeks*; gun robh an t-àm agam tilleadh: *that it was time I returned*; thathar a' dèanamh dheth: *it is maintained (said)*; le aibhnichean brasa air dà thaobh dheth: *with swift-flowing rivers on two sides of it*; chithear na clachan bhuapa fhathast: *the stones from them can still be seen*; bonn a' chnuic: *the base of the hill*; cuide rium: *along with me*; agus sinn nar suidhe còmhla air mullach an dùin: *when we were sitting together at the summit of the hill*; cha do dh'obraich cùisean mar a bha dùil: *things didn't work out as expected*; mar bheathach ann am pian: *like an animal in pain*; no mar bhean-sìthe ag èigheachd: *or like a fairy woman shouting*; chuir an abhainn stad oirnn: *the river stopped us*; a' sruthadh ro luath: *running too swiftly*; an raineach trom b' fheudar dhuinn coiseachd: *the bracken through which we had to walk*; dh'fhàs cùisean na bu mhiosa: *things got worse*; tha na craobhan marbha nan laighe far an do thuit iad: *the dead trees are lying where they fell*; b' fheudar dhuinn dhol thairis orra is fodhpa: *we had to go over them and under them*; cù bochd!: *poor pooch!*; ciamar fon ghrèin a chaidh mo thaghadh leis an teaghlach seo?: *how on earth did I get selected by this family?*; sealladh àlainn: *a beautiful view*; torrach is feurach: *fertile and grassy*; 's e as coireach ri sin na daoine a bha a' fuireach ann: *the people who lived there are responsible for that*; cha robh ùine agam an sgeulachd innse do chàch: *I didn't have time to tell the others the story*; cha robh sinn airson a bhith glaiste air an dùn: *we didn't want to be stuck on the hill*; gun fhiosta dè an creutair a bha a' sgreuchail: *without knowing what creature was screeching*; aig àrd a chinn: *at the top of its voice*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Bha e ro àrd airson damh, ged is e an Dàmhair a bh' ann: *It was too high-pitched for a stag, although it was October. Note the*

*accented “a” in Dàmhair although it originates in damh which is a short “a”. Dàmhair comes from damh-dàir (stag-rut). There is a potential problem in interpretation of àrd in relation to sound as it can mean both “high-pitched” and “loud”. Tog do ghuth gu h-àrd means “speak loudly” rather than “speak in a falsetto voice”! If in doubt, mòr can be used to express volume (guth mòr – a loud voice).*

**Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: bha dragh oirnn mun ùine a bheireadh e:** *we were concerned about the time it would take.*

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