

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 roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 407. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 103 corresponds to Litir 407.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Chalum Beag an t-seachdain sa chaidh. Bha Calum a’ fuireach anns na Srianan no *Streens of Findhorn*. Bha e mì-chliùiteach airson a bhith a’ goid sprèidh.

Cha robh aige ach aon each – fear sean, bàn. Bha e feumach air each na b’ fheàrr oir bha aige ri tòrr treabhaidh a dhèanamh. Mharbh e an t-each aige. Thug e an t-seiche dheth agus thiodhlaic e an closach.

Air an ath oidhche, choisich e gu ruige tuathanas ann am baile eile air taobh thall na h-aibhne. Chaidh e don stàball agus thug e a-mach leis an t-each a b’ fheàrr a bh’ ann. ’S e each donn a bh’ ann. Chaidh e dhachaigh leis.

Chuir e an t-seiche bhàn air an each dhonn. Le fuaigheal sgileil, bha e a’ coimhead coltach ri each bàn. Cha b’ urrainn don tuathanach an t-each donn aige a lorg.

Rinn Calum an treabhadh leis. An uair sin, thug e an t-seiche dheth agus thug e an t-each donn air ais don stàball. Madainn a bha seo, lorg an tuathanach an t-each aige san stàball a-rithist. Bha e slàn fallain.

Bha nàbaidh aig Calum a bha spìocach. Latha a bha seo, dh’iarr e air Calum thighinn suas airson muc a spadadh dha. “Leis gu bheil i cho beag,” thuirt an nàbaidh, “cha b’ urrainn dhomh dad dhith a thoirt seachad ach a-mhàin cas dheiridh a bheir mi dhut fhèin. Ach dè a’ chomhairle a bheireadh tu dhomh gus nach bi càch anns an nàbaidheachd an dùil pìos feòla fhaighinn bhuam?”

Bha Calum a’ faicinn cothrom dha fhèin. “Cuir an closach gu lèir don abhainn air beulaibh an taigh agad a-nochd,” thuirt e. “Fàsaidh e fuar is bidh sin math don fhèoil. Faodaidh tu coiseachd sìos don taigh againn a-màireach leis an naidheachd gun deach a’ mhuc agad a ghoid. Can sin ri duine sam bith a choinnicheas riut.”

Uill, dh’aontaich an duine bochd sin a dhèanamh. Ach tha fhios nach do chuir Calum Beag seachad an oidhche gu lèir na leabaidh! Air an làrna-mhàireach, cha robh sgeul air closach na muice san abhainn. Chaidh an duine gu taigh Chalum. “Chaidh a’ mhuc agam a ghoid,” thuirt e.

“**Seadh, seadh,**” arsa Calum ris, “agus dèan cinnteach gun cum thu ris an sgeul sin nuair a choinnicheas tu ri daoine eile.”

“Ach ’s e an fhìrinn a th’ agam,” thuirt an nàbaidh a-rithist. “Chaidh a goid ann an dha-rìreabh.”

“Seadh, seadh, tha fhios a’ m,” thuirt Calum, agus is iongantach mura phriob e a shùil ris an fhear eile!

Turas eile ghoid Calum mart bho mhuillear ann an Allt Èireann. Chaidh Calum ann, le a ghearran na chois, airson min a cheannach. Fhuair e a’ mhin. Ach bha e faisg air ciaradh an fheasgair, agus thug am muillear cuireadh dha fuireach airson na h-oidhche.

Ann am meadhan na h-oidhche nuair a bha a h-uile duine eile nan cadal, chaidh Calum a-mach don stàball. Cheangail e am mart a b’ fheàrr aig a’ mhuillear ri a ghearran, chuir e a’ mhin

air muin a' ghearrain agus dh'iarr e air dhol dhachaigh. Cheangail e sguab ri earball a' mhairt airson lorgan-coise nam beathaichean a sgrios. Dh'fhalbh an dà bheathach agus chaidh Calum air ais do a leabaidh ann an taigh a' mhuilleir.

Annas a' mhadainn bha ùpraid ann mu chall nam beathaichean. **Thug Calum a' chreidsinn** gun robh e feargach mu chall a ghearrain agus cha b' urrainn don mhuillear dearbhadh nach robh e air a bhith na shuain fad na h-oidhche.

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Faclan na Litreach: stàball: *stable*; donn: *brown*; muillear: *miller*; Allt Èireann: *Auldearn*; ùpraid: *uproar*.

Abairtean na Litreach: mì-chliùiteach airson a bhith a' goid sprèidh: *infamous for stealing livestock*; bha e feumach air each na b' fheàrr: *he needed a better horse*; bha aige ri tòrr treabhaidh a dhèanamh: *he had to do a lot of ploughing*; thug e an t-seiche dheth: *he removed the hide*; thiodhlaic e an closach: *he buried the carcass*; fuaigheal sgileil: *skilful sewing*; cha b' urrainn don tuathanach an t-each donn aige a lorg: *the farmer couldn't find his brown horse*; slàn fallain: *fit and healthy*; bha nàbaidh aig X a bha spìocach: *X had a neighbour who was miserly*; dh'iarr e air X thighinn suas airson muc a spadadh dha: *he asked X to come up and kill (for butchery) a pig for him*; ach a-mhàin cas dheiridh a bheir mi dhut fhèin: *except for a hind leg which I will give to yourself*; dè a' chomhairle a bheireadh tu dhomh?: *what advice would you give me?*; gus nach bi càch anns an nàbaidheachd an dùil pìos feòla fhaighinn bhuan: *so that everyone else in the neighbourhood will expect to receive a piece of meat from me*; air beulaibh an taigh agad a-nochd: *in front of your house tonight*; leis an naidheachd gun deach a' mhuc agad a ghoid: *with the news that your pig was stolen*; an oidhche gu lèir na leabaidh: *the entire night in his bed*; dèan cinnteach gun cum thu ris an sgeul sin: *make sure you keep to that story*; 's e an fhìrinn a th' agam: *I'm telling the truth*; chaidh a goid ann an dha-rìreabh: *it really was stolen*; is iongantach mura phrìob e a shùil: *it's likely he winked*; le a ghearran na chois: *accompanied by his garron (Highland pony)*; cheangail e sguab ri earball a' mhairt: *he tied a broom to the cow's tail*; nach robh e air a bhith na shuain: *that he hadn't been deeply asleep*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: “Seadh, seadh,” arsa Calum ris: “Aye, aye,” Calum said to him. *Seadh is a really useful word, usually translated as “aye”, “yes” or “uh-uh”, but only employed in certain circumstances. It can be used to confirm or agree with a statement made by somebody else, or to lend emphasis eg seadh dìreach (yes indeed). It is used in response to your name being called eg “A Dhòmhnail!” “Seadh?”. In a telephone conversation it can be useful as a “filler” when responding to somebody else without actually agreeing or disagreeing with them. And in the Litir it is used by Calum Beag (with a sense of irony) to indicate that he “knows” the other man is telling an untruth but without wanting to say that openly. You will also hear “Aidh, aidh” being used in the same way in Gaelic.*

Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: **Thug Calum a' chreidsinn** gun robh e feargach: *Calum pretended that he was angry. Tha X a' toirt a' chreidsinn air Y: X is causing Y to believe (ie pretending to Y).*

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