

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.maclea@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 451. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 147 corresponds to Litir 451.

Gu siar air Loch Tatha ann an Siorrachd Pheairt, tha lochan anns a’ mhonadh air a bheil Lochan nan Damh. Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh a lorg, tha e eadar Gleann Lòchaidh agus Gleann Dochard air talamh àrd. O chionn fhada, bha muinntir an àite ag ràdh gun robh taibhse a’ fuireach faisg air an lochan.

Bha eagal air a’ mhòr-shluagh ron taibhse. Cha bhiodh i a’ nochdadh a-mhàin air an oidhche, ach tron latha cuideachd. **A latha no a dh’oidhche** bhiodh daoine a’ seachnadh an locha.

Aig an àm ud bha fear treun a’ fuireach faisg air Cill Fhinn ann an Gleann Lòchaidh. ’S e an t-ainm a bh’ air Donnchadh Mòr Ruadh na Feusaig. Thathar ag ràdh gur e Caimbeulach a bh’ ann – Donnchadh Caimbeul – ach bha daoine eòlach air mar Dhonnchadh Mòr Ruadh na Feusaig. Cha leig mi leas innse dhuibh mar a fhuair e am far-ainm sin.

Bha Donnchadh sgileil le claidheamh. Agus cha ghabhadh e eagal ro rud sam bith. Chuir e roimhe cur às don taibhse agus feasgar a bha seo dh’fhalbh e a-mach leis fhèin a dh’ionnsaigh an lochain. Thachair fear a b’ aithne dha ris air an rathad. Dh’fhaighnich e de Dhonnchadh **cà’ robh e a’ dol**. “Airson an taibhse a chur aig fois,” fhreagair fear na feusaig. Thug am fear eile comhairle dha gun a dhol ann leis fhèin ach lean Donnchadh air chun an lochain. Thachair e ris an taibhse agus cha do nochd an taibhse timcheall Lochan nan Damh tuilleadh.

Nuair a bha Donnchadh na bhodach, bha daoine faisg air Calasraid, ann an àite ris an canar an Tiobairt, a’ gearain mu thaibhse. Bha i a’ nochdadh far an do thachair murt. Bha Donnchadh dhen bheachd, nan toireadh e air an taibhse bruidhinn ris, gum faigheadh e cuidhteas i. Latha a bha seo bha e a’ dèanamh deiseil. Dh’fhaighnich a’ bhean aige carson a bha e a’ toirt claidheamh leis. Mhìnich e gun robh e a’ dol a chur às don taibhse. Dh’iarr a bhean air fuireach aig an taigh, ach dhiùlt e.

Ach leis gur e bodach a bh’ ann, cha robh e cho luath air a chasan. Dh’iarr a’ bhean aige air fear òg anns a’ bhaile ruith a Chill Fhinn air taobh eile a’ ghlinne, gus nach fhaiceadh Donnchadh e. Nuair a ruigeadh e Cill Fhinn bha aige ri dhol a chèilidh air seann charaid aig Donnchadh airson innse dha na bha fa-near do Dhonnchadh.

Gu fortanach bha an seann charaid a-staigh. Nuair a chuala e an naidheachd, dh’fhalbh e a-mach air an rathad eadar Cill Fhinn is taigh Dhonnchaidh mar gun robh e dìreach a’ gabhail cuairt air a shocair. Cha b’ fhada gus an do nochd Donnchadh.

“**Cà’il thu a’ dol** a Dhonnchaidh?” thuirt a charaid ris.

“Tha mi a’ cluinntinn,” fhreagair Donnchadh, “gu bheil taibhse aig an Tiobairt a tha a’ cur dragh air gach neach a tha a’ gabhail an rathaid sin an dèidh beul na h-oidhche agus ’s e mo rùn toirt oirre bruidhinn agus a cur gu fois gu bràth.”

“Tut, a dhuine!” thuirt a charaid, “’s e taibhse Ghallta a th’ innte. Chan eil Gàidhlig aicse agus chan eil Beurla agadsa agus chan urrainn dhuibh a chèile a thuigsinn.”

Mheòraich Donnchadh air sin tiotan agus thuirt e, “Tha thu ceart. Cha do smuainich mi air sin.” Thill e dhachaigh sa mhionaid agus fhad ’s as fiosrach mise, cha deach Donnchadh Mòr Ruadh na Feusaig an tòir air taibhsean a-chaoidh tuilleadh.

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Faclan na Litreach: Loch Tatha: *Loch Tay*; Siorrachd Pheairt: *Perthshire*; Gleann Lòchaidh: *Glen Lochay*, Gleann Dochart: *Glen Dochart*; Cill Fhinn: *Killin*; Calasraid: *Callander*; Tiobairt: *Tibbert*; a’ gearain: *complaining*; dhiùlt e: *he refused*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Bha eagal air a’ mhòr-shluagh ron taibhse: *the population was scared of the ghost*; cha bhiodh i a’ nochdadh a-mhàin air an oidhche: *she wouldn’t appear just at night*; Donnchadh Mòr Ruadh na Feusaig: *big red-haired Duncan of the beard*: cha leig mi leas innse dhuibh mar a fhuair e am far-ainm sin: *I don’t need to tell you how he got that nickname*; sgileil le claidheamh: *skilful with a sword*; chuir e roimhe cur às don taibhse: *he decided to get rid of the ghost*; a dh’ionnsaigh an lochain: *towards the lochan*; gun a dhol ann leis fhèin: *not to go there by himself*; bha X dhen bheachd: *X reckoned*; nan toireadh e air an taibhse bruidhinn ris, gum faigheadh e cuidhteas i: *if he forced the ghost to speak to him, that he would get rid of her*; leis gur e bodach a bh’ ann: *because he was an old man*; air taobh eile a’ ghlinne, gus nach fhaiceadh X e: *on the other side of the glen, so that X wouldn’t see him*; bha aige ri dhol a chèilidh air seann charaid aig X: *he had to go and visit an old friend of X*; airson innse dha na bha fa-near do X: *to tell him of X’s intentions*; mar gun robh e dìreach a’ gabhail cuairt air a shocair: *as if he were just taking a leisurely walk*; cha b’ fhada gus an do nochd X: *it wasn’t long until X appeared*; an dèidh beul na h-oidhche: *after nightfall*; ’s e mo rùn toirt oirre bruidhinn agus a cur gu fois gu bràth: *it is my desire to make her speak and put her to rest for ever*; ’s e taibhse Ghallta a th’ innte: *she is a non-Gaelic ghost*; chan urrainn dhuibh a chèile a thuigsinn: *you can’t understand each other*; mheòraich X air sin tiotan: *X contemplated that for a moment*; fhad ’s as fiosrach mise: *as far as I know*; cha deach X an tòir air taibhsean a-chaoidh tuilleadh: *X never went in pursuit of ghosts again*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Dh’fhaighnich e de Dhonnchadh cà’ robh e a’ dol: *he asked Duncan where he was going*. Cà’ robh is a shortened form of Càite an robh and you will hear it very commonly in speech. Cà’ robh Alasdair a-raoir? [*where was Alasdair last night?*] Cà’ bheil is the present tense form and is also very common in speech: Cà’ bheil thu? [*where are you?*]. It is sometimes abbreviated even further [*as in the Litir*] to Cà’ il as in Cà’ il thu a’ dol? [*where are you going?*]

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: A latha no a dh’oidhche: *by day or by night*.

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