

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.macleam@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 452. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 148 corresponds to Litir 452.

Bu mhath leam stòiridh eile innse dhuibh an t-seachdain seo à Braghaid Albainn. Dh’innis mi dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh mu Dhonnchadh Mòr Ruadh na Feusaig à Gleann Lòchaidh faisg air Cill Fhinn. An t-seachdain sa, tha mi airson stòiridh innse dhuibh air a bheil *Bàs a’ Bhaigeir* no *The Beggar’s Death*. Feuchaidh mi ri cumail, cho fad ’s as urrainn dhomh, ris a’ Ghàidhlig anns an deach an stòiridh innse bho thùs – ’s e sin Gàidhlig Siorrachd Pheairt.

Tha e a’ tachairt taobh Loch Tatha anns an taigh aig fear air an robh Donncha MacPhàrlain. Sin mar a chaidh ainm a sgrìobhadh – “Donncha”, seachd “Donnchadh”. Co-dhiù, oidhche a bha siud, bha Donncha a-staigh a’ leughadh a’ Bhìobail. Sheinn e salm agus rinn e ùrnaigh. Shuidh e mu choinneamh an teine, a’ smuaineachadh air an nì a leugh e. Chaidh a bhean a laighe san leabaidh a bha sa cheàrn.

B’ iongantach an rud a thachair an uair sin. Thàinig neul dorch, dubh a-staigh air an doras. Aig a’ cheart àm thuit dà chathair air an làr agus ghlaodh a bhean, “O Dhonncha, dèan grèim orm oir tha cudrom uabhasach ga chur orm.” Cha b’ e sin uile, ach stad an t-uaireadair-cluig agus thuit an crochadan air an ùrlar le gleadhraich eagallach. Cha robh mòran fois no cadail am fàrdach Dhonncha air an oidhche sin.

Dh’fheòraich iad de chèile ciod bu chiall do na nithean oillteil sin. Cha robh e fada mun d’ fhuair iad freagairt. Beagan làithean an dèidh sin, fhuair duine bochd bàs san taigh.

Feasgar samhraidh a bha seo chunnaic clann a bha a’ dol dhachaigh o sgoil am baigear a bha seo. Bha iad eòlach air. ’S ann tric a bhiodh e ag iarraidh dèirc bho mhuinntir an àite. Bha e air an oidhche a chur seachad aig taigh Dhonncha mu thràth. Ach, an latha seo, cha robh e gu math. Bha coltas an eug air a ghnùis.

Le strì mhòr agus le spàirn chruaidh, chaidh e **ris a’ bhruthach**. ’S iomadh anail a ghabh e mun d’ ràinig e taigh Dhonncha. Aig doras Dhonncha leig e a chudrom air a bhata. Car ùine cha b’ urrainn dha bruidhinn ri Donncha.

Ged a bha Donncha na dhuine coibhneil, truacanta, bha e san tomhartaich mun duine bochd a ghleidheadh rè na h-oidhche. Bha e follaiseach da shùilean nach biodh an truaghan fada beò. Thuig an creutair mar a bha a’ chùis, agus thuirt e, “Mur toir Dia a bheannachd dhut airson do choibhneas, chan eil e na mo chomas-sa airgead no òr a thoirt dhut.”

“Seadh, seadh, thig a-staigh. Feumaidh sinn do ghlèidheadh car oidhche co-dhiù,” thuirt Donncha. Chaidh an deòra truagh a-staigh, agus a-mach cha tàinig e gus an deachaidh a ghiùlan air falbh airson **adhlacadh** beagan làithean an dèidh sin.

Bha ciallachadh nan nithean mìorbhaileach a thachair a-nise soilleir gu leòr do Dhonncha, agus cha robh feum air innseadh dha carson a thuit crochadan an uaireadair. Bu uaireadairiche an duine marbh. A bheil sibh eòlach air an fhacal sin – *uaireadairiche*? Tha e a’ ciallachadh fear a bhios a’ dèanamh uaireadairean – *a watchmaker or clockmaker*. Bu uaireadairiche an duine marbh agus bu chinnteach Donncha gur e rabhadh bàis an uaireadairiche a bha anns gach nì dhiubh sin. Ciod bu fhreagarraiche na gun tuiteadh an crochadan agus gun stadadh an t-uaireadair ro bhàs an uaireadairiche?

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Faclan na Litreach: Braghad Albainn: *Breadalbane*; Siorrachd Pheairt: *Perthshire*; Loch Tatha: *Loch Tay*; Donncha MacPhàrlain: *Duncan MacFarlane*; neul: *cloud*; spàirn: *struggle*; deòra: *stranger*.

Abairtean na Litreach: a’ leughadh a’ Bhìobaill: *reading the Bible*; sheinn e salm agus rinn e ùrnaigh: *he sang a psalm and he made a prayer*; mu choinneamh an teine: *in front of the fire*; sa cheàrn: *in the corner*; b’ iongantach an rud a thachair an uair sin: *the next thing that happened was amazing*; thuit dà chathair: *two chairs fell over*; dèan grèim orm oir tha cudrom uabhasach ga chur orm: *hold me because there is a terrible burden come upon me*; stad an t-uaireadair-cluig: *the clock stopped*; thuit an crochadan: *the pendulum fell*; gleadhraich eagallach: *a frightful clang*; cha robh mòran fois no cadal am fàrdach Dhonncha: *there wasn’t much rest or sleep in Duncan’s house*; dh’fheòraich iad de chèile: *they asked each other*; ciod bu chiall do na nithean oillteil: *what the terrible things meant*; ’s ann tric a bhiodh e ag iarraidh dèirc: *he would often seek alms*; coltas an eug air a ghnùis: *the look of death on his countenance*; ’s iomadh anail a ghabh e: *he took many breaths*; leig e a chudrom air a bhata: *he put his weight on his stick*; car ùine: *for a while*; ged a bha X na dhuine coibhneil, truacanta: *although X was a kind and compassionate man*; bha e san tomhartaich: *he hesitated*; mun duine bochd a ghleidheadh rè na h-oidhche: *about keeping the poor man through the night*; da shùilean: *to his eyes*; nach biodh an truaghan fada beò: *the poor wretch wouldn’t live long*; chan eil e na mo chomas-sa airgead no òr a thoirt dhut: *it’s not in my ability to give you silver or gold*; cha robh feum air innseadh dha carson: *there was no need to tell him why*; bu uaireadairiche an duine marbh: *the dead man was a clockmaker*; rabhadh bàis: *a warning of [impending] death*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: gus an deachaidh a ghiùlan air falbh airson **adhhlacadh** beagan làithean an dèidh sin: *until he was carried away for his funeral a few days later*. There are three words in common usage for “funeral” in different places: *tiodhlacadh*, *adhhlacadh* and *tòrradh*. If you live in a Gaelic-speaking community, ask your Gaelic-speaking friends what they use [if it’s in Ness, it’ll be *adhhlacadh*; if it’s in South Uist it will be *tòrradh*]. If you don’t have a connection with any particular Gàidhealtachd location, I’d recommend you use *tiodhlacadh* – it’s understood everywhere.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: chaidh e ris a’ bhruthach: *he went uphill/up the slope*. I hope you remembered this from just a few weeks ago (*Litir 437, 16.11.07*)! Where *bruthach* is masculine it will be *ris a’ bhruthach* but in areas where it is feminine it is slenderised in the dative singular ie *ris a’ bhruthaich* – so you’ll hear both.

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