

# 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 561. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 257 corresponds to Litir 561.*

Tha mi a' leantainn leis an stòiridh *An Rìgh agus an Searrach*. Thuir an rìgh ris an duine, "Thig air ais an seo a-màireach. Mura h-inns thu dhomh gu dè as luaithe a th' air an t-saoghal, caillidh thu do cheann."

Chaidh an duine dhachaigh. Bha dragh air. Dh'fhaighnich a nighean dheth gu dè bha a' cur air. Dh'inns e mar a bha.

"Carson nach do dh'inns sibh don rìgh nuair a bha sibh thall a-staigh aige?" thuir an nighean.

"Dè dh'innsinn dha?" dh'fhaighnich a h-athair.

"Nach robh sian air an t-saoghal cho luath ris an smaoineachadh," fhreagair a nighean.

"A bheil thu fhèin dhen bheachd," ars esan, "gu bheil smaoineachadh cho luath sin?"

"Nach eil fios agaibh gu bheil, athair," ars ise. "Faodaidh sibh a bhith an seo agus faodaidh ur smuaintean a dhol sa mhionaid gu taobh thall an t-saoghail. Chan eil eun no creutair eile a rachadh gu taobh thall an t-saoghail cho luath sin."

"Tha sin fìor," ars an duine. Air an làrna-mhàireach, dh'fhalbh e don chaisteal.

"Thàinig thu," thuir an rìgh.

"Thàinig, ur Mhòrachd," ars an duine.

"Agus dè an rud as luaithe air an t-saoghal?"

"Chan eil nì air an t-saoghal cho luath ri smaoineachadh."

"Tha an t-each agam nas luaithe na sin," thuir an rìgh.

"Chan eil, le ur cead," ars an duine. "Faodaidh ur smuaintean a bhith air taobh thall na rìoghachd ann an tiotan. Chan eil each sam bith cho luath sin."

"A," ars an rìgh, "tha mi riarichte le sin. Ach tha mi a' dol a chur ceist eile ort. Cò tha a' fuireach còmhla riut?"

"Tha mo nighean a' fuireach còmhla rium," fhreagair an duine.

"Seadh," ars an rìgh. "Tha mi ag iarraidh do nighean a phòsadh."

"Faodaidh sibh sin," thuir an duine. "Tha e aig a toil fhèin. Chan iarr mise oirre ur pòsadh, 's **cha mhotha** a bhacas mi i."

"Tha sin math gu leòr dhomh," thuir an rìgh. "Gabhaidh mi ris a sin."

Choinnich an rìgh ris an nighinn. Dh'aontaich i a phòsadh. Ach thuir an rìgh gun robh e a' dol a chur cùmhnant air a' phòsadh.

"Ceart, ma-thà," ars an nighean. "**Cluinneam** an cùmhnant."

"Uill, seo an cùmhnant," ars an rìgh. "Ma thig sìon eadarainn, feumaidh tu an caisteal fhàgail."

"Tha sin math gu leòr," ars ise. "Ach feumaidh mise cùmhnant a dhèanamh cuideachd."

“Seadh,” ars esan, “tha sin iomchaidh gu leòr.”

“Ma thig sìon eadarainn,” thuirt i, “fàgaidh mi an caisteal ach faodaidh mi trì eallaich a thoirt leam a-mach às a’ chaisteal.”

“Tha sin math gu leòr,” ars an rìgh. Agus phòs iad. An ceann greis rugadh leanabh gille dhaibh. Chaidh bliadhna seachad.

Bha tuathanach a’ fuireach faisg air làimh. Bha làir aige, agus bha searrach aig an làir. ’S e searrach làidir a bh’ ann. Latha a bha seo, chaidh an làir agus an searrach don bheinn. Bha eich aig an rìgh air a’ bheinn. Bha, agus gearran cuideachd. Le “gearran” tha mi a’ ciallachadh “each fireann a bh’ air a spothadh”. Agus, air adhbhar air choreigin, chaidh an searrach air ais a dh’ionnsaigh stàball a’ chaisteil leis a’ ghearran.

Thuirt an rìgh gur ann leis-san a bha an searrach. Cha b’ urrainn don tuathanach fhaighinn air ais. Dè bha a’ dol a thachairt? Cuiridh mi crìoch air an sgeulachd an ath-sheachdain.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** An Rìgh agus an Searrach: *The King and the Foe*; an làrna-mhàireach: *the next day*; ur Mhòrachd: *your Majesty*; riarichte: *satisfied*; tuathanach: *farmer*; làir: *mare*; gearran: *gelding*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** mura h-inns thu dhomh gu dè as luaithe a th’ air an t-saoghal: *if you don’t tell me what is the fastest [thing] in the world*; caillidh thu do cheann: *you’ll lose your head*; bha dragh air: *he was upset*; dh’fhaighnich a nighean dheth gu dè bha a’ cur air: *his daughter asked him what was upsetting him*; dè dh’innsinn dha?: *what would I tell him?*; cho luath ris an smaoineachadh: *as swift as [the] thinking*; faodaidh ur smuaintean a dhol sa mhionaid: *your thoughts can go instantaneously*; chan eil eun no creutair eile a rachadh: *there is no bird or other creature that would go*; le ur cead: *by your leave*; air taobh thall na rìoghachd ann an tiotan: *at the other side of the kingdom in an instant*; tha mi ag iarraidh do nighean a phòsadh: *I want to marry your daughter*; faodaidh sibh sin: *you can [do] that*; aig a toil fhèin: *up to her*; gabhaidh mi ris a sin: *I’ll accept that*; a’ dol a chur cùmhnant air a’ phòsadh: *going to impose a condition on the marriage*; ma thig sìon eadarainn: *if anything comes between us*; feumaidh tu an caisteal fhàgail: *you must leave the castle*; iomchaidh gu leòr: *fair enough*; rugadh leanabh gille dhaibh: *a baby boy was born to them*; each fireann a bh’ air a spothadh: *a stallion that has been castrated*; a dh’ionnsaigh stàball a’ chaisteil: *to the castle’s stable*; gur ann leis-san a bha X: *that X belonged to him*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** **Cluinneam** an cùmhnant: *let me hear the condition*. *Cluinneam is an example (rarely met with in speech) of the first person singular imperative of a verb (in this case cluinneam); to form it, we add -(e)am to the root of the verb. It incorporates the personal pronoun so there is no need for a pronoun. There is not properly a first person singular imperative in English but we can create a phrase which fulfils the same function ie “let me” eg cuiream tuath e, cuiream deas e (let me send him north, let me send him south); bitheam gach latha agus oidhche ri luaidh ort (let me each day and night be praising thee); na cluinneam a leithid seo de chainnt (don’t let me hear this sort of talk).*

**Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach:** Chan iarr mise oirre ur pòsadh, ’s **cha mhotha** a bhacas mi i: *I won’t ask her to marry you, and neither will I stand in her way.*

*Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA*