

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Damh agus an t-Asal

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 rodgy.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 630. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 326 corresponds to Litir 630.

Seo agaibh stòiridh beag traidiseanta air a bheil “An Damh agus an t-Asal”. Bha damh agus asal uaireigin a’ fuireach air an aon tuathanas. Bha saoghal bochd aig an damh oir bha e ag obair a h-uile latha **o mhoch gu dubh**. Bha e a’ fàs caol. Ach bha saoghal a’ choin bhàin aig an asal. Bha glè bheag aige ri dhèanamh. Bhiodh e a’ gabhail fois **nuair a thogradh e**. Bha e air fàs cho reamhar ri ròn.

Latha a bha seo, thuirt an damh ris an asal, “Tha mi seachd searbh sgèth de bhith ag obair fad na h-ùine, fhad ’s a tha thusa a’ gabhail air do shocair.”

“Tha adhbhar gearain agad, a charaid,” dh’aontaich an t-asal. “Tha fada cus agad ri dhèanamh. Innsidh mi dhut dè nì thu. Leig ort nach eil thu gu math. Cha bhi agad ri dad a dhèanamh.”

Rinn an damh mar a dh’iarr an t-asal air. An ath mhadainn, leig e air gun robh e tinn. Nuair a nochd an tuathanach, thòisich an damh air gearan agus ochanaich. Làigh e sìos mar gun robh e tinn.

“Feumaidh nach eil an damh gu math an-diugh,” thuirt an tuathanach ris fhèin, “agus is beag an t-iongnadh. Tha cus aige ri dhèanamh. Leigidh mi leis fois a ghabhail an-diugh. Ach tha sin a’ dèanamh chùisean doirbh dhomh. Ciamar a nì mi treabhadh a-nise? Chan eil roghainn agam ach an t-asal a chur a dh’obair na àite. Tha an t-àm aig an asal barrachd a dhèanamh.”

Chaidh an t-asal a chur ris a’ chrann. Bha e a’ treabhadh fad an latha. Fhad ’s a bha e ag obair gu cruaidh, bha an damh a’ gabhail fois anns an stàball. Mus tàinig beul na h-oidhche bha an t-asal claoidhte le sgèths. Chuir e roimhe nach biodh latha dhen t-seòrsa seo aige a-rithist.

Nuair a thill an t-asal don stàball, chaidh e far an robh an damh. Cha do leig e air gun robh e sgèth. Thuirt e ris an damh, “Tha thu fortanach, ’ille, gu bheil cluasan biorach ormsa. Tha rabhadh agam dhut. Chuala mi an tuathanach a’ bruidhinn ri a bhean mu do dheidhinn.”

“Agus dè thuirt e?” dh’fhaighnich an damh.

“Thuirt gu bheil thu gun fheum nuair a tha thu tinn,” fhreagair an t-asal. “Mura fàs thu nas fheàrr gu luath, thuirt e, cuiridh e às dhut.”

Chuir seo eagal dearg a bheatha air an damh. Thug e taing mhòr don asal airson rabhadh a thoirt dha. An ath mhadainn, nuair a nochd an tuathanach, chaidh an damh air a chasan gu sgiobalta. Chaidh e mach a dh’obair anns na h-achaidhean gun ghearan sam bith. Bha e taingeil don asal airson a bheatha a shàbhaladh.

Rinn an t-asal gàire bheag dha fhèin. Bha e a' gabhail fois anns an stàball fhad 's a bha an damh air ais ag obair anns an achadh leis a' chrann. "S ann mar sin a tha cùisean," thuirt an t-asal ris fhèin. "Feumaidh cuid de chreutairean a bhith ag obair gu cruaidh agus chan eil dol-às aca." Uill, tha aon rud fìor – cha robh an t-asal seòlta dhen bheachd gun robh esan am measg nan creutairean bochda sin!

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Faclan na Litreach: dh'aontaich: *agreed*; crann: *plough*; stàball: *stable*; rabhadh: *warning*; seòlta: *cunning*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha damh agus asal uaireigin a' fuireach air an aon tuathanas: *an ox and a donkey were at one time living on the same farm*; bha saoghal a' choin bhàin aig an asal: *the donkey enjoyed the life of Riley*; seachd searbh sgìth: *thoroughly fed up*; fhad 's a tha thusa a' gabhail air do shocair: *while you take your ease*; tha adhbhar gearain agad: *you have cause for complaint*; leig ort nach eil thu gu math: *pretend you're not well*;

thòisich an damh air gearan agus ochanaich: *the ox started to complain and sigh*; mar gun robh e tinn: *as if he were sick*; is beag an t-iongnadh: *it's hardly a surprise*; chan eil roghainn agam ach an t-asal a chur a dh'obair na àite: *I have no choice except to put the donkey to work in his place*; mus tàinig beul na h-oidhche bha an t-asal claidhte le sgìths: *before nightfall came, the donkey was exhausted*; chuir e roimhe nach biodh latha dhen t-seòrsa seo aige a-rithist: *he decided he wouldn't have a day like this again*; tha thu fortanach, 'ille, gu bheil cluasan biorach ormsa: *you're fortunate, lad, that I have sharp ears*; gun fheum nuair a tha thu tinn: *useless when you're sick*; cuiridh e às dhut: *he'll kill you*; chuir seo eagal dearg a bheatha air an damh: *this frightened the ox out of his wits*; feumaidh cuid de chreutairean a bhith ag obair gu cruaidh agus chan eil dol-às aca: *some creatures need to work hard and they have no choice*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Bhiodh e a' gabhail fois **nuair a thogradh e**. *He would take a rest when he wished. The verb togair, a' togradh ("wish, desire, like") is most commonly used in one of the future tenses eg faodaidh tu tighinn ma thogras tu (you can come if you wish; thoir leat na thogras tu dhen bhiadh (take with you what you want of the food); faodaidh iad falbh nuair a thogras iad (they can leave when they want); cuir na craobhan far an togair thu (plant the trees wherever you want). But it is sometimes used with the conditional, as it is in the Litir. Here are some other examples: bhiodh e a' dèanamh mar a thogradh e fhèin (he would do whatever he desired); dhèanadh i e nan togradh i (she would/could do it if she wished).*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: o mhoch gu dubh: *all day long (from early to nightfall)*.

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA