

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Luran (2)

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 652. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 348 corresponds to Litir 652.

Seo agaibh stòiridh à Barraigh a chaidh a chlàradh bho Chalum MacIain, no Calum Johnston, nach maireann. 'S e an t-ainm a th' air 'Luran'. Tha an teachdaireachd mu bhrochan, no lite, rud beag eadar-dhealaichte bhon teachdaireachd a fhuair sinn an t-seachdain sa chaidh bhon stòiridh mu 'Luran' à Uibhist a Deas.

Bha uaireigin fear ann a bha na croitear. Bha e fhèin 's a' bhean aige a' fuireach ann an àite iomallach leotha fhèin. Bha fearann gu leòr aca, agus crodh. Bha ìm is bàrr gu leòr aca, agus **cha robh nì a dh'ith orra**.

Gach bliadhna air Oidhche Shamhna, bhiodh an croitear a' call beathach air choreigin – **beathach mairt** no laogh no rudeigin dhen t-seòrsa. Cha robh sian a dh'fhios aige dè thachair dhaibh. Bliadhna a bha seo, bha Oidhche Shamhna a' teannadh dlùth. Chuir an croitear roimhe faire a chumail air a chuid sprèidh Oidhche Shamhna gus nach cailleadh e dad.

Thàinig Oidhche Shamhna agus bha an croitear a' cumail faire. Cha robh e air a bhith ann fada nuair a chunnaic e dithis bhodachan a' coiseachd dha ionnsaigh. Thuig e sa bhad gur e sìthichean a bh' annta. Thàinig iad a-steach don bhuaile, chuir iad grèim air a' bheathach mairt a b' fheàrr a bh' ann, agus dh'fhalbh iad leis.

A-mach air an tòir a chaidh an croitear, ach cha robh e luath gu leòr. An dèidh greis, bha e claidhte agus stad e air toman airson anail a ghabhail. Uill, feumaidh gun robh na sìthichean sgèith iad fhèin, agus bha iad air stad gu math faisg air mullach an tomain. Bha iad a' bruidhinn ri chèile. Eagal 's gun robh an croitear a' dèanamh farchluais orra, cha do dh'ainmich iad e. Chuir iad 'Luran' air mar ainm.

“Nach Luran a ruith gu luath?” thuirt fear.

“Tha a chuid arain cho cruaidh,” thuirt am fear eile. “Nan gabhadh e brochan, seach aran, bhiodh e na bu luaithe na na fèidh.”

Chuala an croitear seo. Thill e dhachaigh. Nuair a ràinig e an taigh, dh'fhaighnich a' bhean aige mar a chaidh dha. Dh'innis e dhi a h-uile nì a thachair, facal air an fhacal.

“Nach d' fhuair thu am beathach air ais?” dh'fhaighnich i.

“Cha d' fhuair,” ars esan, “ach dh'ionnsaich mi rudeigin a bhios feumail dhomh, a dh'aindeoin sin.”

“Dè th' ann?” thuirt a' bhean.

“Uill, innsidh mi dhut,” fhreagair e. “Feumaidh tu brochan is bainne a thoirt dhomh gach latha airson na bliadhna romhainn.”

“Math gu leòr,” ars ise. “Nì mi sin.” Agus fad na bliadhna thug i brochan is bainne dha mar bhiadh, gach madainn no gach feasgar, a rèir a thoil fhèin.

Agus nuair a thàinig Oidhche Shamhna timcheall a-rithist, thuirt e rithe, “Tha mi a’ dol a chumail faire air an sprèidh a-nise.” Agus chaidh e a-mach mar a chaidh a’ bhliadhna roimhe. Agus thàinig an dithis shìthichean a-rithist. Thug iad leotha am beathach mairt a b’ fheàrr anns a’ bhuaile.

Ruith an croitear às an dèidh. An turas seo, bha e na bu luaithe. Fhuair e grèim air a’ bheathach agus thug e dhachaigh e. Agus cha do chuir na sìthichean dragh air tuilleadh.

Agus brìgh an sgeòil? Tha – gum bu chòir do gach gille a bu mhath leis a bhith sgiobalta air a chasan brochan is bainne a ghabhail gach latha!

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Faclan na Litreach: Barraigh: *Barra*; Uibhist a Deas: *South Uist*; Oidhche Shamhna: *Halloween*; claidhte: *exhausted*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha uaireigin fear ann a bha na chroitear: *there was at one time a man who was a crofter*; cha robh sian a dh’fhios aige: *he had no idea*; a’ teannadh dlùth: *drawing close*; chuir X roimhe faire a chumail air a chuid sprèidh: *X decided to watch his livestock*; gus nach cailleadh e dad: *so he wouldn’t lose anything*; dithis bhodachan a’ coiseachd dha ionnsaigh: *two little old men walking towards him*; thuig e sa bhad gur e sìthichean a bh’ annta: *he understood immediately that they were fairies*; chuir iad grèim air a’ bheathach mairt a b’ fheàrr a bh’ ann: *they got hold of the best beast there was*; a-mach air an tòir: *out in pursuit of them*; stad e air toman airson anail a ghabhail: *he stopped on a hillock to get his breath*; eagal ’s gun robh X a’ dèanamh farchluais orra: *in case X was eavesdropping on them*; nan gabhadh e brochan, seach aran, bhiodh e na bu luaithe na na fèidh: *if he would take porridge, rather than bread, he would be swifter than the deer*; dh’fhaighnich X mar a chaidh dha: *X asked him how he [had] got on*; facal air an fhacal: *word for word*; dh’ionnsaich mi rudeigin a bhios feumail dhomh, a dh’aindeoin sin: *I learned something that will be useful to me, despite that*; a rèir a thoil fhèin: *according to his preference*; a bu mhath leis a bhith sgiobalta air a chasan: *who would like to be nimble on his feet*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: beathach mairt no laogh no rudeigin dhen t-seòrsa: *a cow or calf or the like*. When you look up ‘cow’ in an English-Gaelic dictionary, it will invariably give *bò*, but in many instances *mart* or *beathach mairt* is more likely to be used, particularly if one is being general and not specific about the type of cow (*mart* can also refer to a steer, whereas *bò* always represents a female animal). *Mart* was also used traditionally for the cow or steer fattened and slaughtered for winter food. If you needed convincing about how important such animals were in traditional Gaelic society, search under ‘cow’ in the electronic version of Dwelly’s dictionary (www.dwelly.info). You’ll find 307 headwords referring to cows or some aspect of their anatomy and use or traditions and idiom connected to them.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: cha robh nì a dhìth orra: *they wanted for nothing*. For extra emphasis, you might say *cha robh nì sam bith a dhìth orra*.

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