

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Dòmhnall Ruadh agus an Claigeann

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. This is Litir 681. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 377 corresponds to Litir 681.

Bha fear, air an robh Dòmhnall Ruadh mar ainm, a’ coiseachd tro choille. Dè lorg e anns a’ choille ach claigeann. Bhreab Dòmhnall an claigeann. “Dè thug an seo thu?” thuirt Dòmhnall. Agus fhreagair an claigeann e. “Bruidhinn – ’s e sin a thug an seo mi.” Chlisg Dòmhnall. Thuirt e ris fhèin, “Innsidh mi seo don Rìgh – gun do bhruidhinn an claigeann rium.”

Chaidh e don Rìgh. “Lorg mi claigeann anns a’ choille, agus bhruidhinn e rium,” thuirt e.

“Bhruidhinn e?” ars an Rìgh. “Dè thuirt e?”

“Dh’ fhaighnich mi dheth, ‘Dè thug an seo thu?’ agus thuirt e, ‘S e bruidhinn a thug an seo mi.’”

“Chan eil mi gad chreidsinn,” thuirt an Rìgh. “Cuiridh mi dithis de na freiceadain agam còmhla riut don choille. Ma bhruidhneas an claigeann riut, ceart gu leòr. Mura bruidhinn, bheir mi do cheann dhìot airson a bhith ag innse bhreugan.”

“O, bhruidhinn e,” fhreagair Dòmhnall, agus dh’ fhalbh e leis an dithis fhreiceadan. Ràinig iad an claigeann. Bhreab Dòmhnall an claigeann. “Dè thug an seo thu?” dh’ fhaighnich e. **Cha tuirt** an claigeann **smid**. Chuir e a’ cheist a-rithist. Bha an claigeann balbh. Thug na freiceadain Dòmhnall air ais don Rìgh.

“Carson a bha thu ag innse bhreugan?” thuirt an Rìgh. “Caillidh thu do cheann. Ach bheir mi aon chothrom eile dhut. An ceann trì latha, cuiridh mi trì ceistean ort. Mura toir thu na freagairtean ceart dhomh, bheir mi do cheann dhìot.”

Bha iomagain mhòr air Dòmhnall. Cha robh fios aige dè dhèanadh e. Air an rathad dhachaigh thachair ri Gilleasbaig Aotrom. “**An ainm an Àigh**, a Ghilleasbaig,” thuirt e, “dè nì mi...?” Mhìnich e do Ghilleasbaig mun chlaigeann a bhruidhinn ris.

“Thoir dhomh do chuid aodaich,” thuirt Gilleasbaig. “Thèid mise ann nad àite agus freagraidh mise ceistean an Rìgh.”

Agus ’s e sin a thachair. Chaidh Gilleasbaig don luchairt. Cha do dh’ aithnich an Rìgh e. “Thàinig thu, a Dhòmhnall,” thuirt an Rìgh. “Nise, mura freagair thu na ceistean dòigheil, thig do cheann far do ghualnean. Seo a’ chiad cheist – dè cho fada ’s a bheir e dhomh a dhol timcheall an t-saoghail?”

“Tha a’ ghrian a’ toirt ceithir uairean fichead,” fhreagair Gilleasbaig, “agus cha b’ urrainn dhuibhse a dhol timcheall cho luath sin.”

“Glè mhath,” ars an Rìgh. “Nise, an dàrna ceist – dè luach a th’ orm?”

“Reic sinn ar Slànaighear airson trithead bonn,” fhreagair Gilleasbaig, “agus tha mi làn chinnteach nach eil sibh fhèin cho luachmhor sin.”

“Math gu leòr,” thuirt an Rìgh. “Ach nì mi a’ chùis ort an turas seo. Cò air a tha mi a’ smaoinichadh an-dràsta?”

“Tha sibh a’ smaoinichadh gur e Dòmhnall Ruadh a th’ air ur beulaibh,” thuirt Gillesbaig. “Ach tha sibh fada ceàrr. Is mise Gillesbaig Aotrom.”

Agus, anns an dòigh sin, fhuair e dheth. Agus fhuair Dòmhnall dheth a bharrachd. Cha chailleadh e a cheann airson a bhith ag innse bhreugan.

Chaidh iad dhachaigh tron choille. Bha Dòmhnall feargach leis a’ chlaigeann. Chaidh e suas don chlaigeann agus thug e breab mhòr dha. “Dè thug ort thighinn an seo,” thuirt e, “a’ cur fo àmhghar mi?”

“S e bruidhinn a thug an seo mi,” fhreagair an claigneann!

Agus ’s e sin an stòiridh – *Dòmhnall Ruadh agus an Claigneann.*

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Faclan na Litreach: fhreagair: *replied*; balbh: *silent*; iomagain: *anxiety*; lùchairt: *palace*; Slànaighear: *Saviour*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bhreab Dòmhnall an claigneann: *Donald kicked the skull*; dè thug an seo thu?: *what brought you here?*; bruidhinn – ’s e sin a thug an seo mi: *speaking – that’s what brought me here*; dh’fhaighnich mi dheth: *I asked him*; chan eil mi gad chreidsinn: *I don’t believe you*; ma bhruidhneas an claigneann riut, ceart gu leòr: *if the skull speaks to you, no problem*; mura bruidhinn, bheir mi do cheann dhìot: *if it doesn’t speak, I’ll have your head off*; airson a bhith ag innse bhreugan: *for telling lies*; dh’fhalbh e leis an dithis fhreiceadan: *he left with the two guards*; caillidh thu do cheann: *you’ll lose your head*; bheir mi aon chothrom eile dhut: *I’ll give you one more opportunity*; mura toir thu na freagaritean ceart dhomh: *if you don’t give me the correct answers*; dè dhèanadh e: *what he would do*; thoir dhomh do chuid aodaich: *give me your clothes*; nad àite: *instead of you*; mura freagair thu na ceistean dòigheil: *if you don’t answer the questions properly*; thig do cheann far do ghualnean: *your head will come off your shoulders*; dè cho fada ’s a bheir e dhomh a dhol timcheall an t-saoghail?: *how long will it take for me to go around the world*; dè luach a th’ orm?: *what am I worth?*; trithead bonn: *thirty pieces*; nì mi a’ chùis ort: *I’ll defeat you*; cò air a tha mi a’ smaoinichadh?: *what am I thinking about?*; a th’ air ur beulaibh: *that’s in front of you*; a’ cur fo àmhghar mi: *causing me vexation*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: An ainm an Àigh: *“in the name of goodness” or “for goodness’ sake”*. A good, strong expression, without any rudeness or offensiveness attached to it. Make sure you include the accent on the “a”, in both speech and writing, as there is also a word agh that means “heifer, young cow, deer hind”. Àgh (genitive àigh) means “joy, bliss, good fortune, providence” and is most commonly used today in idiomatic expressions like the one above. Another good expression is Gun sealladh an t-Àgh orm! [lit. “oh that providence would look upon me”] which is an equivalent to the English “Goodness gracious me!”

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Cha thuirt an claigneann smid: *the skull didn’t utter a syllable*.

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