

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Clach a' Choire, Tiriodh (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 789. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 485 corresponds to Litir 789.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Chlach a' Choire – *The Ringing Stone* – ann an Tiriodh. Tha i faisg air cladach a tuath an eilein. 'S e clach iomrallach a th' innte a thàinig bho Eilean Rùm ann an Linn na Deighe. Tha caogad 's a trì làraichean cruinn no ugh-chruthach oirre a chaidh a dhèanamh le mac-an-duine. Thathar a' smaoinichadh gun robh a' chlach air a cur gu feum ann an cleachdaidhean diadhaidh còrr is ceithir mìle bliadhna air ais.

Agus 's dòcha gun do lean an creideamh sin, gu ìre air choreigin, ann an linn nan Gàidheal. A rèir beul-aithris, co-dhiù, bha na Tiristich dhen bheachd gun robh rudeigin os-nàdarrach mun chloich. Seo agaibh an stòiridh mu Chlach a' Choire agus Lachlann am Bàrd.

O chionn fhada bha gnothaichean truagh ann an Tiriodh. Bha na daoine bochd agus gann de bhiadh. Chaidh fear a bha seo a-mach a dh'ionnsaigh na cloiche. B' esan Lachlann am Bàrd. Cha robh e ann riamh roimhe ach bha e air cluinntinn gun robh cumhachdan sònraichte aig a' chloich. Bha e a' dol a shireadh cobhair bhuaipe oir bha an sluagh ann an èiginn.

Le a dhòrn dùinte tharraing e builleann air a' chloich. Ach cha tàinig fuaim sam bith aiste. Bha i mar chlach sam bith eile.

An uair sin, thog e dòirneag bhon chladach. Bhuail e gu cruaidh air a' chloich leatha trì tursan. Thàinig fuaim mòr às a' chloich, mar gur e clag iarainn a bh' innte.

Sheas Lachlann air ais. An ceann ùine ghoirid, nochd ceann anns a' chuan faisg air. Shaoil e an toiseach gur e ròn a bh' ann. Ach mar a thàinig an creutair na b' fhaisg' air a' chladach, chunnaic Lachlann gun robh ceann fìr aige, le falt fada. Bha an t-eagal air an duine ach sheas e far an robh e.

Thàinig an creutair a-mach às a' mhuir. Choisich e suas an cladach a dh'ionnsaigh Lachlainn. Nuair a bha e faisg air a' bhàrd, thuirt e, 'Carson a ghairm thu orm, a Lachlainn?'

'Tha am mart agam bochd agus tha i air sguir a thoirt bainne,' fhreagair an duine, agus eagal na ghuth. 'Chan eil biadh agam airson mo leanabh.'

Sheas an creutair na thost. Bha e a' gabhail beachd air an t-suidheachadh. Mu dheireadh, thuirt e, 'Tha mòran daoine **ann an eugmhais** aig an àm seo. Ach thàinig thusa air mo thòir airson cobhair. Thalla dhachaigh agus thoir biadh dha do leanabh. Na inns do dhuine an reusan a thàinig thu an seo.'

Thionndaidh an creutair air ais don chuan. Mus deach e fodha, thuir e a-rithist, ‘Tha mòran daoine ann an eugmhais...’ Thionndaidh Lachlann air a shàil agus chaidh e dhachaigh.

Nuair a ràinig e an taigh, fhuair e am mart slàn agus làn de bhainne. Mar a bha e dhàsan, ’s ann a bha e do na coimhearsnaich aige cuideachd. Bha pailteas bainne is bìdh aca bho sin a-mach.

Cha tuirt Lachlann guth ri duine mun turas aige do Chlach a’ Choire. Uill, cha tubhairt gus an robh e na sheann duine, agus na h-oghaichean timcheall air ri taobh an teine.

Nise, nuair a bha mi fhìn aig a’ chloich o chionn ghoirid, chunnaic mi ròn anns a’ mhuir faisg orm. Uill, tha mi a’ smaoinichadh gur e ròn a bh’ ann...

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Faclan na Litreach: clach iomrallach: *erratic [stone]*; os-nàdarrach: *supernatural*; dòirneag: *fist-sized pebble*; ròn: *seal*; pailteas: *plenty*; oghaichean: *grandchildren*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bho Eilean Rùm ann an Linn na Deighe: *from the Isle of Rum in the Ice Age*; tha caogad ’s a trì làraichean cruinn no ugh-chruthach oirre a chaidh a dhèanamh le mac-an-duine: *there are 53 round or oval markings on it that were made by man*; air a cur gu feum ann an cleachdaidhean diadhaidh: *used in religious practices*; gu ìre air choreigin: *to some degree or other*; bochd agus gann de bhiadh: *poor and short of food*; a-mach a dh’ionnsaigh na cloiche: *out to the stone*; cha robh e ann riamh roimhe: *he’d never been there before*; bha e a’ dol a shireadh cobhair bhuaipe oir bha an sluagh ann an èiginn: *he was going to seek its help because the people were in a bad predicament*; le a dhòrn dùinte tharraing e buillean air X: *with his fist closed he hit X*; bhuaile e gu cruaidh air a’ chloich leatha: *he hit the stone hard with it*; mar gur e clag iarainn a bh’ innte: *as if it were an iron bell*; chunnaic Lachlann gun robh ceann fir aige, le falt fada: *Lachlann saw that it had the head of a man, with long hair*; carson a ghairm thu orm?: *why did you call for [on] me?*; tha am mart agam bochd agus tha i air sguir a thoirt bainne: *my cow is poorly and she has stopped giving milk*; bha e a’ gabhail beachd air an t-suidheachadh: *he was considering the situation*; na inns do dhuine an reusan: *don’t tell anybody the reason*; mus deach e fodha: *before it submerged*; mar a bha e dhàsan, ’s ann a bha e do na coimhearsnaich aige cuideachd: *as it was for him, so it was for his neighbours also*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Sheas an creutair na thost: *The creature stood in silence. The reason for the lenition of tost ‘silence’ is that it is preceded by na which contains the third person singular masculine possessive pronoun (because creutair is masculine); literally I was saying ‘the creature stood in his silence’. If it had been feminine I would have said sheas i na tost as the feminine possessive pronoun does not cause lenition. Other examples would be sheas mi nam thost, sheas thu nad thost, sheas sinn nar tost, sheas iad nan tost.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Tha mòran daoine ann an eugmhais aig an àm seo: *many people are in want/suffering deprivation at this time.*

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