

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Uilleam agus am Mèirleach

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 801. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 497 corresponds to Litir 801.

Bha fear às an Eilean Sgitheanach a’ fuireach ann am baile mòr Leeds ann an Sasainn. ’S e Uilleam an t-ainm a bh’ air. Nuair a bhiodh daoine a’ faighneachd dheth carson a bha e a’ fuireach ann an Leeds, chanadh e gun do cheannaich e tiogaid bus ann an Glaschu turas airson a dhol don Ath Leathann.

‘Single to Bradford,’ thuir e ri fear nan tiogaidean. Bha trioblaid aig Uilleam le deoch làidir. Bha e dìreach air trì uairean a thìde a chur seachad ann an taigh-seinnse. ‘Single to Bradford,’ thuir e a-rithist, a’ feuchainn ri a theanga obrachadh dòigheil.

‘*Sure, pal,*’ thàinig freagairt bho air cùl na glainne. ‘*Stance 5. It’s leavin’ the noo.*’

Ruith Uilleam a-mach don bhus, sheall e an tiogaid don dràibhear agus ghabh e suidheachan. Cha b’ fhada gus an robh cadal nam marbh air. Nuair a dhùisg e, bha i dorch. Bidh sinn faisg air Gleanna Comhann, thuir e ris fhèin, agus ghabh e norrag eile. Leis an fhìrinn innse, bha iad faisg air Penrith. Agus nuair a ràinig e a cheann-uidhe, cha robh e ann am ‘Bradford’, ach ann am Bradford.

Agus cha do dh’fhalbh e. Uill, chaidh e cho fada ri Leeds. Thachair e ri Tracey a bha na gruagaire. Phòs iad, agus bha Uilleam dòigheil gu leòr. Thòisich e gnìomhachas. Bha bhana gheal aige le *The Handy Skyeman: No Jobs Too Tough* sgrìobhte oirre. Bha e moiteil às fhèin gur e Sgitheanach a bh’ ann.

Cha bhiodh e a’ dol dhachaigh **don Eilean** uair sam bith, ge-tà. Cha robh airgead aige. Bhiodh e ga chosg anns an taigh-seinnse a h-uile oidhche. Dh’fheuchadh e ri faighinn a-steach gu sàmhach ann an uairean beaga na maidne, ach bha Tracey an-còmhnaidh na dùisg. Bhiodh i a’ coimhead air mar gur e amadan a bh’ ann. Agus ’s e amadan a bh’ ann, mar a bhiodh e fhèin aig aideachadh. Amadan na dibhe.

Oidhche a bha seo, thàinig e dhachaigh mu thrì uairean sa mhadainn. Thug e iuchair a-mach. Ach cha robh feum oirre. Bha an doras mòr fosgailte. Dh’fhàs Uilleam amharasach. Carson nach robh an doras glaiste?

Choisich e a-steach agus chunnaic e gun robh uinneag briste. Bha stuth na laighe air an ùrlar. Bha an telebhisean air falbh. Bha mèirleach air a bhith anns an taigh. Agus choisich e **a-mach air an doras mhòr**. Dh’fhàs Uilleam feargach. An uair sin iomagaineach. An robh Tracey ceart gu leòr?

Ruith e suas an staidhre cho math ’s a b’ urrainn. Bha a bhean na cadal. Dhùisg Uilleam i agus dh’inns e dhi mun mhèirle. Chuir e iongnadh oirre. Cha chuala i dad.

An ath latha, chaidh Uilleam gu stèisean nam poileas. ‘Nuair a gheibh sibh am mèirleach,’ thuirt e ris an t-sàirdseant, ‘tha mi ag iarraidh bruidhinn ris.’

‘Bidh cothrom agad fhaicinn sa chùirt,’ thuirt am poileas.

‘Feumaidh mi bruidhinn ris,’ thuirt Uilleam a-rithist.

‘Chan fhaod sibh ceartas a dhèanamh ach tro ùghdarras na stàite,’ thuirt am poileas.

‘Tha mi coma mu cheartas,’ thuirt Uilleam, ‘tha mi ag iarraidh fiosrachadh.’

Chuir seo iongnadh air an t-sàirdseant. ‘Dè am fiosrachadh?’

‘Tha mi airson faighinn a-mach,’ thuirt Uilleam, ‘ciamar a fhuair am mèirleach a-steach don taigh agam gun a bhith a’ dùsgadh mo mhnà. Tha mise air a bhith a’ feuchainn airson bhliadhnaichean agus bidh i gam chluinntinn an-còmhnaidh!’

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Faclan na Litreach: Gleanna Comhann: *Glencoe*; norrag: *snooze*; a cheann-uidhe: *his desination*; gruagaire: *hairdresser*; bhana: *van*; iuchair: *key*; mèirleach: *thief, burglar*; iomagaineach: *concerned*.

Abairtean na Litreach: chanadh e gun do cheannaich e tiogaid bus ann an Glaschu turas: *that he bought a bus ticket in Glasgow one time*; airson a dhol don Ath Leathann: *to go to Broadford*; bha e dìreach air trì uairean a thìde a chur seachad ann an taigh-seinnse: *he had just spent three hours in a pub*; a’ feuchainn ri a theanga obrachadh dòigheil: *trying to get his tongue to work properly*; ghabh e suidheachan: *he took a seat*; cha b’ fhada gus an robh cadal nam marbh air: *it wasn’t long until he was in a deep sleep*; dòigheil gu leòr: *happy enough*; bha e moiteil às fhèin: *he was proud of himself*; dh’fheuchadh e ri faighinn a-steach gu sàmhach: *he would try to get in quietly*; ann an uairean beaga na maidne: *in the small hours of the morning*; an-còmhnaidh na dùisg: *always awake*; ’s e amadan a bh’ ann, mar a bhiodh e fhèin aig aideachadh: *he was a fool, as he would admit himself*; cha robh feum oirre: *there was no need for it [her]*; an doras mòr: *the front door*; bha stuth na laighe air an ùrlar: *stuff was lying on the floor*; cho math ’s a b’ urrainn: *as well as he could*; chuir e iongnadh oirre: *he surprised her*; bidh cothrom agad fhaicinn sa chùirt: *you’ll have an opportunity to see him in court*; chan fhaod sibh ceartas a dhèanamh ach tro ùghdarras na stàite: *you cannot obtain justice except through the authority of the state*; tha mi coma mu cheartas: *I couldn’t care less about justice*; gun a bhith a’ dùsgadh mo mhnà: *without waking my wife*; bidh i gam chluinntinn an-còmhnaidh: *she always hears me*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Cha bhiodh e a’ dol dhachaigh **don Eilean** uair sam bith: *he’d never go home to the Island. Skye people will sometimes just refer to there home island as An t-Eilean, as if there were no other. This, naturally enough, is seen as slightly presumptuous, or even arrogant, by inhabitants of some of the other Gaelic islands! In fact, the reason may simply be that most islands have a name that doesn’t include ‘Eilean’ eg Leòdhas, Ìle, Uibhist, Muile, whereas ‘Sgitheanach’ can’t be used in that way (it means a Skye person), so An t-Eilean is the best way of contracting a rather long name.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: choisich e a-mach air an doras mhòr: *he walked out of the front door.*

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