

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Ùisdean 's an Tombaca (1)

*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](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 816. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 512 corresponds to Litir 816.*

Dh'fhàg mi sibh le tòimhseachan aig deireadh na Litreach mu dheireadh – dè an gas nach lion an soitheach sa bheil e?' 'S e am fuasgladh an gas a th' air lus – *the stem of a plant*. Chan obraicheadh sin ann am Beurla!

Tha mi a' dol a dh'innse dhuibh mu Ùisdean à Inbhir Pheofharain. Nuair a bha e òg, dh'fhàs e dèidheil air tombaca. Ghabh smocadh grèim air. 'S **gann gum faicte** Ùisdean gun toitean na bheul.

Nuair a bha e fichead bliadhna a dh'aois, chaochail uncail dha, agus fhuair Ùisdean a' chroit aige. Bha i mu dheich mìle a-mach às a' bhaile. Bha seo anns an t-seann aimsir. Leis gun robh fearann aige a-nise, b' urrainn dha bean a ghabhail. **Cha b' fhada** gus an robh e a' suirghe le Ceitidh NicDhonnchaidh à Cunndainn. Phòs iad agus gheall Ùisdean dha fhèin gum biodh e na dheagh chèile do Cheitidh.

Ach cha deach aige air stad a chur air a chuid smocaidh. Mar a bu mhotha a dh'fheuch e ris am tombaca a chur an dàrna taobh, 's ann a bu dorra a dh'fhàs e. Bha miann mhòr aige air ceò an tombaca a bhith na sgamhan.

Ge-tà, bha e deich mìle bhon aon bhùth a bha a' reic tombaca. Nuair nach robh gin air fhàgail san taigh, bhiodh e ann am fìor dhroch shunnd. Bha e mar chù crosta a chaill a chnàimh.

Nuair a phòs Ùisdean is Ceitidh, cheannaich iad cuilean. 'S e cù-coilidh a bh' ann, air an robh Sandaidh mar ainm. Bha iad a' dol a dhèanamh cù-chaorach dheth, ach bha Sandaidh uabhasach dèidheil air a dhol an cois a mhaighstirean, agus na caoraich a sheachnadh. Nuair a rachadh Ùisdean a chèilidh air a nàbaidhean, bhiodh an cù an-còmhnaidh na chois. Gheibheadh e fàilte chridheil aig a h-uile nàbaidh.

Latha a bha seo, bha Ùisdean ann am fìor dhroch shunnd. Bha e air a dhol seachdain gun smocadh. Chan fhaca Ceitidh cho greannach e. 'A bheil fios agad dè tha ceàrr ort, Ùisdein?' thuirt i. 'Tha thu feumach air tombaca. Thall' a Bhaile a' Chàil agus ceannaich gu leòr airson mìos.' 'S e 'Baile a' Chàil' a chanadh daoine ri Inbhir Pheofharain anns an t-seann aimsir.

'Am faod mi, a ghràidh?' fhreagair Ùisdean. Bha e cho sona ris an rìgh.

'Agus aon rud eile,' thuirt a bhean. 'Thoir Sandaidh leat. Bidh a' chuairt math dha.'

Dh'fhalbh an duine 's an cù còmhla air an rathad a dh'Inbhir Pheofharain. Ràinig iad bùth an tombaca agus cheannaich Ùisdean gu leòr airson mìos. Thug fear na bùtha briosgaid do Shandaidh. Bha e math mar mharsantach, agus chunnaic e cothrom an cois a' choin.

‘Carson nach ceannaich thu tombaca bhuam a h-uile seachdain?’ thuirt e.  
‘O, tha mi ro thrang airson tighinn an seo a h-uile seachdain,’ fhreagair Ùisdean. ‘Tha e ro fhada.’

‘Ge-tà,’ thuirt fear na bùtha. ‘Dh’fhaodadh an cù a thighinn air do shon.’

‘An cù?’ ars Ùisdean.

‘Gu dearbh,’ thuirt fear na bùtha. ‘Cuir leth-chrùn ann an nèapraigear timcheall amhaich, agus iarr air thighinn don bhùth. Cuiridh mise tombaca luach leth-chrùn san nèapraigear agus thèid e dhachaigh leis.’

‘Mmm. Saoil an obraicheadh sin?’ thuirt Ùisdean. ‘Carson nach fheuch sinn e? Agus dh’fheuch – an ath thuras a bha tombaca gann san taigh. Agus innsidh mi dhuibh mar a chaidh do Shandaidh an-ath-sheachdain.’

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**Faclan na Litreach:** gas: *stem of a plant*; Inbhir Pheofharain: *Dingwall*; croit: *croft*; greannach: *ill-tempered*; Baile a’ Chàil: ‘*Cabbage Town*’ – *an old local name for Dingwall*; briosgaid: *biscuit*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** dè an gas nach lìon an soitheach sa bheil e?: *which ‘gas’ does not fill its container?*; chan obraicheadh sin ann am Beurla: *that wouldn’t work in English*; dh’fhàs e dèidheil air tombaca: *he became keen on tobacco*; ghabh smocadh grèim air: *he became addicted to tobacco*; chaochail uncail dha: *an uncle of his died*; Ceitidh NicDhonnchaidh à Cunndainn: *Katie Robertson from Contin*; gheall Ùisdean dha fhèin: *Hugh promised himself*; gum biodh e na dheagh chèile do Cheitidh: *that he would be good husband to Katie*; cha deach aige air stad a chur air a chuid smocaidh: *he didn’t manage to stop his smoking*; mar a bu mhotha a dh’fheuch e ris am tombaca a chur an dàrna taobh, ’s ann a bu dorra a dh’fhàs e: *the more he tried to avoid tobacco, the more difficult it became*; bha miann mhòr aige air ceò an tombaca a bhith na sgamhan: *he had a great desire to have tobacco smoke on his lungs*; bhiodh e ann am fìor dhroch shunnd: *he’d be in a really bad mood*; bha e mar chù crosta a chaill a chnàimh: *he was like an angry dog that [had] lost its bone*; a bheil fios agad dè tha ceàrr ort?: *do you know what is wrong with you?* bha iad a’ dol a dhèanamh cù-chaorach dheth: *they were going to make a sheepdog of it*; an cois a mhaighstirean: *along with his masters*; cuir leth-chrùn ann an nèapraigear timcheall amhaich: *put a half-crown in a kerchief around his neck*; tombaca luach leth-chrùn: *tobacco to the value of half a crown*; saoil an obraicheadh sin?: *I wonder if that would work*; carson nach fheuch sinn e?: *why don’t we try it?*

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** ‘S gann gum faicte Ùisdean gun toitean na bheul: *Hugh would hardly ever be seen without a cigarette in his mouth. Chìte is the independent passive conditional form of the verb faic ‘see’; it means ‘would be seen’. The dependent form is faicte eg gum faicte ‘that it would be seen’.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Cha b’ fhada gus an robh e a’ suirghe: *It wasn’t long until he was courting.*

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