

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Teine Mòr (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 826. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 522 corresponds to Litir 826.

Ann an t-seann aimsir bha na Gàidheil gu math measail air dathan dearga. Bhiodh marsantan-paca a’ siubhal bho bhaile gu baile, a’ reic dathan dearga, leithid càrnaid is màdar. Ach cha robh mòran airgid aig daoine. Bhiodh iad a’ feuchainn ri rudan a lorg anns an dùthaich aca fhèin às am faigheadh iad an dath dearg – no ruadh.

Ann an Uibhist bha lus aca a bha cumanta gu leòr air a’ mhachair no air bruthaichean tiorama gainmhich. Gheibhear e ann fhathast. Tha coltas snog air an lus. Tha duilleagan beaga mìne air, agus flùraichean beaga buidhe. Ach ’s iad na freumhaichean a bu mhotha a bha a’ tarraing dhaoine. Oir gheibhte dath dearg no ruadh às. Leis a sin, ’s e Rù no Rù Mhoire a chanas muinntir Uibhist ris an lus. Tha ainmean eile air ann an sgìrean eile, leithid Lus an Leasaich ‘*the rennet plant*’ oir bidh e a’ binndeachadh bainne cuideachd.

Ann an Uibhist is Beinn a’ Bhaoghla, bhathar a’ buain cus dhen lus seo. Agus bha mòran de ghainmheach thioram nam bruthaichean air a siabadh air falbh leis a’ ghaoith. Bha e a’ dèanamh cron air an àrainneachd. Dh’fheuch na h-uachdarain – agus na maoir aca – ri stad a chur air a leithid. Mar sin, bhiodh boireannaich a’ falbh a-mach air an oidhche, a bhuain an rù anns an dorchadas.

Bha tuathanach ann am Beinn a’ Bhaoghla ris an abradh iad ‘Calum Sagart’. Bhuineadh e do Chloinn ’ic Carraig. Bha e na dhuine **cho modhail ’s a gheibhte** anns an dùthaich gu lèir. Ach b’ ann aigesan a bha a’ bhean a bu mhiosa ann an Uibhist. ’S e baobh a bh’ innte.

Bha nighean aig Calum ’s a bhean. Bha i ag iarraidh dath dearg a chur na cuid aodaich agus chuir i roimhpe rù a bhuain air a’ mhachair. Bhiodh e ro chunnartach dhi tron latha oir chitheadh maor i. Mar sin, chuir i roimhpe falbh a-mach an dèidh meadhan-oidhche Oidhche Dhòmhnach.

Bha a màthair anabarrach fada an aghaidh dhi a dhol a bhuain an rù. Ach cha tug an nighean cluas dhi. Bha i rag na dòigh fhèin. Dh’fhalbhadh i **ged a rachadh a’ mhuir h-ear thar a’ mhuir h-iar**. Nuair a bha an nighean a’ dol a-mach air an doras, thuir a màthair, ‘Tha thu a’ falbh le mollachd do mhàthar air do cheann.’ Thuir i nach tilleadh a nighean don taigh, agus i beò.

Mar a thuir, ’s ann a thachair. Cha d’ fhuaras beò no marbh nighean Chalum Shagairt riann, aon chuid air muir no air tìr. Nuair nach do nochd i aig an taigh, chaidh a coimhearsnaich a-mach ga h-iarraidh. Fhuair iad lorg air buill-aodaich aice air a’ mhachair far an robh i a’ buain an rù. Ach cha d’ fhuair iad lorg air a corp.

An ceann beagan ùine an dèidh dha seo tachairt, chunnacas an solas ris an abrar *An Teine Mòr*. Bha cuid ga shamhlachadh ri teine ann an cliabh. Agus bha feadhainn a' creidsinn gur ann an com nighean Chaluim Shagairt a bha an teine. Bha na daoine dhen bheachd gur e a bh' ann ach a taibhs a bhiodh a' siubhal air an talamh gun fhois gu latha a' bhreitheanais. Agus bha gràin an uilc aig muinntir an àite air màthair na h-ìghne bho sin a-mach.

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Faclan na Litreach: marsantan-paca: *packmen, travelling salesmen*; Rù, Rù Mhoire, Lus an Leasaich: *Lady's Bedstraw*; Beinn a' Bhaoghla: *Benbecula*; uachdarain: *landlords*; maoir: *agents, bailiffs*; baobh: *witch, wicked woman*; An Teine Mòr: *will-o'-the-wisp*.

Abairtean na Litreach: dathan dearga, leithid càrnaid is màdar: *red colours, such as scarlet/carnation dye and madder*; bruthaichean tiorama gainmhich: *sand dunes*; gheibhear e ann fhathast: *it's still found there*; tha duilleagan beaga mìne air: *it has small fine leaves*; 's iad na freumhaichean a bu mhotha a bha a' tarraing dhaoine: *it's the roots that attracted people most*; bidh e a' binndeachadh bainne: *it curdles milk*; air a siabadh air falbh leis a' ghaoith: *swept away by the wind*; a bhuain an rù anns an dorchadas: *to pick the rù in the darkness*; b' ann aigesan a bha a' bhean a bu mhiosa: *he had the worst wife*; chuir i roimhe: *she decided*; anabarrach fada an aghaidh dhi: *utterly opposed to her*; cha tug an nighean cluas dhi: *the girl didn't listen to her*; rag na dòigh fhèin: *stubborn in her own way*; a' falbh le mollachd do mhàthar air do cheann: *going out carrying your mother's curse*; cha d' fhuaras beò no marbh X: *X was never found alive or dead*; aon chuid air muir no air tìr: *either at sea or on land*; chaidh a coimhearsnaich a-mach ga h-iarraidh: *her neighbours went out to look for her*; chunnacas an solas ris an abrar X: *the light was seen, which is called X*; bha cuid ga shamhlachadh ri teine ann an cliabh: *some likened it to a fire in a creel (or human chest cavity)*; a taibhs a bhiodh a' siubhal gun fhois gu latha a' bhreitheanais: *her ghost that would wander without rest until judgement day*; bha gràin an uilc aig muinntir an àite air màthair na h-ìghne: *the local people had a fierce hatred for the girl's mother*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Bha e na dhuine **cho modhail 's a gheibhte** anns an dùthaich gu lèir: *he was a man as polite as would be found in the entire country*. Gheibhte (*it is sometimes gheibhteadh, the form used by the Rev John MacRury*) is the conditional passive form of the verb faigh. Gheibhte e 'it would be got, obtained'. It's also in the Litir as gheibhte dath dearg no ruadh às 'a red or red-brown colour would [could] be obtained from it'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **ged a rachadh a' mhuir h-ear thar a' mhuir h-iar: although the eastern sea should cover the western sea ie regardless of what would happen!**

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