

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Teine Mòr (3)

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 827. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 523 corresponds to Litir 827.

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, dh’inns mi stòiridh à Uibhist mun ‘Teine Mhòr’ no ‘Teine Sionnachain’ agus mar a thàinig e gu bith. A-nise seo sgeulachd eile a bh’ aig na Gàidheil o shean, a’ mìneachadh an dearbh ghnothaich.

O chionn fhada, bha gobha a’ fuireach ann an gleannan uaigneach. Bha bean is teaghlach aige. Bha e math air obair, ach bha an obair gann. Mar sin, cha robh airgead gu leòr aige.

Aon bhliadhna, bha a’ chùis cho dona ’s gun robh an t-eagal air gum biodh a chlann a’ bàsachadh le cion a’ bhìdh. Thuir e ris fhèin gun gabhadh e cuideachadh sam bith, eadhon ged a b’ ann bhon Droch Fhear a bhitheadh e.

Latha a bha seo, bha an gobha ag obair sa cheàrdaich nuair a thàinig coigreach a-steach. Thuir an coigreach ris, ‘Cha chreid mi nach eil do dhìol agad fhèin ri dhèanamh do bhean agus do chlann a chumail ann am biadh is aodach.’

‘Tha thu ceart,’ dh’aontaich an gobha.

‘Dè bheireadh tu do dh’fhear,’ dh’fhaighnich an coigreach, ‘a bheireadh dhut na mhiannaicheadh tu de dh’òr ’s de dh’airgead?’

‘Bheirinn rud sam bith a b’ urrainn dhomh,’ fhreagair an gobha.

‘Uill,’ thuir an coigreach, ‘ma gheallas tu dhomh gum falbh thu còmhla rium bliadhna o màireach, bheir mi dhut de dh’òr ’s de dh’airgead na chumas tu fhèin agus do theaghlach cho math air ur dòigh ri Àrd-rìgh na h-Èireann.’ Agus mhìnich an coigreach don ghobha na bha e a’ dol a dhèanamh.

‘Nuair a chuireas tu do làmh nad phòcaid dheis, bidh i làn òir,’ thuir an coigreach. ‘Agus nuair a chuireas tu do làmh nad phòcaid chli, bidh i làn airgid. Ged a bhiodh tu a’ sìor thoirt an òir agus an airgid às do phòcaidean, bidh iad làn a h-uile uair a chuireas tu do làmhan annta.’

Ach bha rabhadh aig a’ choigreach an cois na gheall e. ‘Na cuir bonn sam bith a thug thu às do phòcaidean air ais annta. Ma chuireas, bidh iad falamh an latha sin.’

Cha robh an gobha cinnteach mun bhargan. ‘Tha an tairgse agad math,’ thuir e, ‘ach an ceann latha is bliadhna, bidh e cruaidh leam dealachadh on bhean is on chloinn agam.’

‘Ach smaoinich,’ thuir an coigreach. ‘Mus tig ceann na bliadhna, faodaidh tu pailteas de dh’òr ’s de dh’airgead **a chur ma seach** airson **do mhnà ’s do chloinne**. Cha bhi dith orra.’

Choimhead an gobha air casan a’ choigrich. Bha iad coltach ri ladhran muice. Bha e cinnteach gum b’ e an coigreach an Droch Fhear. A dh’aindeoin sin, ghabh e ris

an tairgse. Thuir e ris fhèin nach b' urrainn dha a bhith cinnteach am biodh e beò an ceann bliadhna. Agus nuair a thigeadh an Droch Fhear air a shon gun dèanadh e rudeigin. 'Cuiridh mi Dia eadar mi 's e,' thuir e ris fhèin.

Dh'fhalbh an coigreach agus rinn an gobha deiseil airson falbh dhachaigh. Thog e a chòta far an stuib far an robh e crochte. Mhòthaich e gun robh e gu math trom. Chan e iongantais a bh' ann, ge-tà. Bha pòcaidean a' chòta loma-làn òir is airgid. Innsidh mi dhuibh an-ath-sheachdain mar a thachair nuair a dh'inns e do bhean mun bhargan a rinn e leis an Droch Fhear.

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Faclan na Litreach: An Teine Mòr, Teine Sionnachain: *will-o'-the-wisp*; ceàrdach: *smiddy*; falamh: *empty*; bargan: *bargain*; tairgse: *offer*.

Abairtean na Litreach: mar a thàinig e gu bith: *how it came into existence*; a' mìneachadh an dearbh ghnothaich: *explaining the same thing*; bha gobha a' fuireach ann an gleannan uaigneach: *there was a blacksmith living in a small remote glen*; bha an obair gann: *work was scarce*; 's gun robh an t-eagal air gum biodh a chlann a' bàsachadh le cion a' bhidh: *that he was scared his children would die from a lack of food*; gun gabhadh e cuideachadh sam bith: *that he would accept any help*; eadhon ged a b' ann bhon Droch Fhear a bhitheadh e: *even though it were from the Devil*; cha chreid mi nach eil do dhìol agad fhèin ri dhèanamh: *I reckon you have your work cut out*; a bheireadh dhut na mhiannaicheadh tu: *who would give you what you desired*; bheirinn rud sam bith a b' urrainn dhomh: *I'd give anything I could*; ma gheallas tu dhomh: *if you promise me*; cho math air ur dòigh ri àrd-rìgh na h-Èireann: *as happy as the High King or Ireland*; ged a bhiodh tu a' sìor thoirt an òir agus an airgid às do phòcaidean: *although you might continually take the gold and silver from your pockets*; an cois na gheall e: *accompanying what he promised*; bidh e cruaidh leam dealachadh o: *it will be hard for me to leave*; cha bhi dìth orra: *they will want for nothing*; coltach ri ladhran muice: *like a pig's trotters*; cuiridh mi Dia eadar mi 's e: *I'll put God between me and him*; thog e a chòta far an stuib far an robh e crochte: *he picked up the coat from the post on which it was hanging*; chan e iongantais a bh' ann: *it wasn't a surprise*; loma-làn òir is airgid: *stuffed full of gold and silver*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: airson do mhnà 's do chloinne: *for your wife and children*. Airson commands a noun (with the article present) in the genitive case. Thus bean becomes mnà and clann becomes cloinne. The article is absorbed into the possessive article do. Without the article we might say airson bean is clann 'for a wife and children'. Mnà and cloinne are lenited following do (think of do thoil fhèin and 's e do bheatha).

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: faodaidh tu pailteas de dh'òr 's de dh'airgead a chur ma seach: *you can put aside plenty of gold and silver*.

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