

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Srath Àrdail (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.macleam@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 844. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 540 corresponds to Litir 844.

Tha sinn a’ fuireach ann an Srath Àrdail ann an Siorrachd Pheairt airson aon seachdain eile. Tha an srath làn dualchas na Gàidhlig. Gu tuath air Cill Mhìcheil, tha baile beag ris an canar Dalnagairn ann am Beurla. ’S e sin Dail nan Càrn ann an Gàidhlig. Tha, no bha, cùirn ann agus b’ e fear dhiubh Càrn na Baoibh. Bha e a’ comharrachadh uaigh aig **baobh**, no droch bhana-bhuidseach, a chaidh a chur gu bàs an sin.

Bha bàs mòr aig crodh na sgìre, agus bha na daoine a’ coireachadh na baoibh. Ach cha bhiodh muinntir an àite ga faicinn fad na h-ùine. Uaireannan bha i do-fhaicsinneach. ’S ann mar sin a bhiodh i a’ dol gu cruinneachaidhean poblach. Bhiodh i a’ toirt sgleog do dhaoine. Leis nach robh iad ga faicinn, bha na daoine dhen bheachd gur e am fear no tè rin taobh a bu choireach. ’S ann tric a bhiodh an gnothach a’ tighinn gu dùirn. Bha muinntir Shrath Àrdail seachd searbh sgìth dhen bhaoibh.

Didòmhnaich a bha seo, bha an sagart fadalach a dhol don eaglais. Bha tàillear a’ cluich le siosar. Airson spòrs thug e sùil tro thuill nan corrag, mar gur e prosbaig a bh’ ann. Agus dè chunnaic e ach a’ bhaobh. Bha i ri a droch chleasan, a’ bualadh air duine an seo agus a’ cur prìne ann an tòn boireannaich an sin.

Cha tuirt e guth ach, an dèidh na seirbheis, chaidh e don t-sagart. Mhìnich e an gnothach dha. Dh’iarr an sagart air gun guth a ràdh ri duine, ach a bhith a’ tilleadh don eaglais an ath Dhidòmhnaich, agus an siosar aige na phòcaid.

Ach cha b’ urrainn don tàillear an gnothach a chumail dìomhair. Chunnaic a bhean gun robh rudeigin air tachairt dha agus fhuair i a naidheachd bhuaithe. Cha b’ fhada gus an robh a’ chùis **am beul a’ bhaile**. Mar dhìoghaltas, rinn a’ bhaobh sgrios a bharrachd air crodh a’ bhaile an t-seachdain sin.

Gu h-annasach, bha a’ bhaobh anns a’ choitheanal Didòmhnaich. Thug an tàillear an siosar aige don t-sagart. Chuir an sagart an siosar ann an aon phòcaid agus botal de dh’uisge coisrigte anns a’ phòcaid eile. Nuair a bha e a’ deisealachadh airson searmonachadh, thug e sùil tron t-siosar agus chunnaic e a’ bhaobh na suidhe anns a’ choitheanal.

Goirid às dèidh dha an searmon a thòiseachadh, sguir e gu h-obann. Chomharraich e a’ bhaobh. Thionndaidh i air a sailean agus theich i. Dh’iarr an sagart air na daoine a leantainn. An dèidh greis a-muigh, shuidh a’ bhaobh air clach. Bha i do-fhaicsinneach do na daoine. Ach thog an sagart an siosar do a shùil agus chunnaic e i.

Dhòirt e an t-uisge coisrigte ann an cearcall timcheall na cloiche. Cha b' urrainn don bhaoibh fhaighinn a-mach. Thòisich na daoine air clachan a chàrnadh oirre. Dh'èigh an sagart, 'Cuiribh oirre, cuiribh oirre – clach airson gach mairt!' 'S e sin a rinn iad, agus fhuair i bàs.

A bheil Càrn na Baoibh ann an-diugh? Chan eil. Chleachd uachdaran na clachan airson drèanaichean a dhèanamh. Ach, gu fortanach, chaidh an stòiridh a chlàradh le Teàrlach MacFhearghais a bhuineadh don sgìre.

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Faclan na Litreach: Srath Àrdail: *Strathardle*; Siorrachd Pheairt: *Perthshire*; Cill Mhìcheil: *Kirkmichael*; cùirn: *cairns*; prosbaig: *binoculars*; do-fhaicsinneach: *invisible*; drèanaichean: *drains*; Teàrlach MacFhearghais: *Charles Fergusson*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha bàs mòr aig crodh na sgìre: *the cattle of the area were suffering great death*; a' coireachadh na baoibh: *blaming the witch*; bhiodh i a' toirt sgleog do dhaoine: *she would slap people*; gur e am fear no tè rin taobh a bu choireach: *that it was the person next to them that was responsible*; 's ann tric a bhiodh an gnothach a' tighinn gu dùirn: *often the matter would come to blows*; bha an sagart fadalach a dhol don eaglais: *the priest was late going to church*; bha tàillear a' cluich le siosar: *a tailor was playing with scissors*; airson spòrs thug e sùil tro thuill nan corrag: *for fun he looked through the finger holes*; bha i ri a droch chleasan: *she was up to her bad tricks*; a' cur prìne ann an tòn boireannaich: *sticking a pin in a woman's bottom*; cha tuirt e guth: *he said nothing*; agus an siosar aige na phòcaid: *with his scissors in his pocket*; fhuair i a naidheachd bhuaithe: *he got his news from him*; anns a' choitheanal Didòmhnaich: *in the congregation on Sunday*; botal de dh'uisge coisrigte: *a bottle of sacred water*; nuair a bha e a' deisealachadh airson searmonachadh: *when he was making ready to give a sermon*; sguir e gu h-obann: *he suddenly stopped*; thionndaidh i air a sàilean agus theich i: *she turned on her heels and she fled*; ann an cearcall timcheall na cloiche: *in a circle around the stone*; thòisich na daoine air clachan a chàrnadh oirre: *the people started to pile stones on her*; òr a dhèanamh de gach clach: *to make each stone into gold*; cuiribh oirre – clach airson gach mairt: *put [a stone] on her – a stone for each cow*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: According to Dwelly's dictionary, *baobh* means 'wizard or wicked mischievous female who invokes a curse or some evil on others'. An associated noun is *baobhachd* and an adjective is *baobhail*. If you google 'witch' in Dwelly's dictionary you get other words like *buidseach*, *bana-bhuidseach*, *obag*, *raidseach*, *briosaid*, *bean-uibe*, *briosag* and *bana-bhuistraich*.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: cha b' fhada gus an robh a' chùis **am beul a' bhaile**: *it wasn't long until the matter was the talk of the community*.

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