

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Sgiobair an t-Soithich Dhuibh (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 853. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 549 corresponds to Litir 853.

Bha mi ag aithris na sgeulachd ‘Sgiobair an t-Soithich Dhuibh’. Bha an sgiobair a’ seòladh gu ruige Lochlann nuair a thuit e don mhuir. Bha a’ bhana-phrionnsa Lochlannach fhathast air bòrd.

Shnàmh e gu eilean. Bha e gu bhith marbh leis an sgìths, ach **chaidh aige air** a tharraing fhèin seachad air an tìurr. Laigh e an sin gun mhothachadh airson ùine mhòr. Dh’fhairich e cuideigin ga phutadh. ‘Èirich,’ thuirte guth.

‘Chan èirich gu bràth,’ fhreagair an sgiobair. Bha e fhathast claidhte.

‘Thig còmhla rium. Tha geòla agam air an tràigh,’ thuirte am fear eile.

‘Ma thà, tha mi còma,’ thuirte an sgiobair. Ach mean air mhean thàinig e thuige, agus chunnaic e an geòla. Dh’fhalbh e innte leis an fhear eile. Bha am fear eile ag iomradh aig astar iongantach. Cha b’ fhada gus an do ràinig iad cladach Lochlainn.

‘Taing mhòr,’ thuirte an sgiobair. ‘Shàbhail thu mo bheatha. **Dè th’ agad orm?**’

‘Direach seo,’ fhreagair am fear eile, ‘Gun toir thu do chiad mhac dhomh.’

‘Chan eil mi an dùil gum bi mac agam a-chaidh,’ thuirte an sgiobair, ‘ach ma bhitheas, bheir mi dhuts’ e.’ Agus rug iad air làimh air a chèile airson am bargan a dhaingneachadh.

Chaidh an sgiobair suas an rathad gus an do ràinig e taigh. Chuir cailleach fàilte air agus dh’inns i naidheachd dha – gun robh nighean an rìgh a’ dol a phòsadh seanailear anns an arm. Bhiodh iad a’ dol seachad air an taigh an ceann greis ann an carbad mòr. Thuig an sgiobair gum b’ e sin an nighean a shàbhail e san Tuirc.

Thog an sgiobair clàrsach. Bha e ga h-aithneachadh. B’ e sin clàrsach a bha e fhèin agus an nighean air cluich còmhla air bòrd an t-soithich. ‘Fàg sin,’ thuirte a’ chailleach, ‘oir ’s ann leis a’ bhana-phrionnsa a tha i. Dh’iarr i orm a cumail dhi.

An uair sin, thàinig an carbad seachad air an taigh. Thòisich an sgiobair air a’ chlàrsach a chluich. Chuala nighean an rìgh e agus dh’èigh i air an dràibhear a’ choidse a stad. Ruith i a-steach don taigh agus thuirte i gun robh i ag iarraidh an sgiobair a phòsadh, seach an seanailear.

Cha robh iad fada pòsta nuair a bha leanabh-gille aca. Bha iad a’ coiseachd leis an leanabh ann am pram nuair a thàinig fear eireachdail thuca. ‘Uill, a-nise,’ thuirte e ris an sgiobair, ‘a bheil thu a’ dol a thoirt do mhic dhomh?’

‘Carson,’ thuirte a bhean, ‘a bheil e ag iarraidh ar mic?’

Mhìnich an sgiobair dhi gum b’ e seo an duine a shàbhail e anns an eilean, agus gum b’ e sin an duais a dh’iarr e.

‘Uill, bidh e agad, ma-thà,’ ars a bhean.

‘Nise,’ thuir am fear eile, ‘leis gu bheil sibh cho reusanta, agus deònach an gille a thoirt dhomh, cha toir mi idir e. An rud a rinn mi dhut, ’s ann mar dhuais a bha e airson mo thiodhlacadh air an tràigh anns an Tuirc. Tha mi a’ falbh a-nise agus chan fhaic sibh tuilleadh mi.’

Thuig Sgiobair an t-Soithich Dhuibh gun robh e air a bhith a’ bruidhinn ri taibhs. Bho sin a-mach bha beatha fhada shitheil aige fhèin ’s aig a theaghlach.

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Faclan na Litreach: shnàmh e: *he swam*; claidhte: *exhausted*; geòla: *dinghy, small boat*; eireachdail: *good-looking, handsome*; reusanta: *reasonable*; taibhs: *ghost*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Sgiobair an t-Soithich Dhuibh: *The Captain of the Black Ship*; a’ seòladh gu ruige Lochlann nuair a thuit e don mhuir: *sailing to Scandinavia when he fell to the sea*; bha e gu bhith marbh leis an sgìths: *he was nearly dead with exhaustion*; laigh e an sin gun mhothachadh: *he lay there unconscious*; dh’fhairich e cuideigin ga phutadh: *he felt somebody pushing him*; ma thà, tha mi còma: *if you have, I couldn’t care less*; mean air mhean thàinig e thuige: *little by little he regained consciousness*; ag iomradh aig astar iongantach: *rowing at an amazing speed*; gun toir thu do chiad mhac dhomh: *that you’ll give me your first son*; chan eil mi an dùil gum bi mac agam a-chaidh: *I don’t expect that I’ll ever have a son*; ach ma bhitheas, bheir mi dhuts’ e: *but if I do, I’ll give him to you*; chuir cailleach fàilte air: *an old woman welcomed him*; gun robh nighean an rìgh a’ dol a phòsadh seanailear anns an arm: *that the king’s daughter was going to marry a general in the army*; bha e ga h-aithneachadh: *he was recognising it [fem]*; oir ’s ann leis a’ bhana-phrionnsa a tha i: *it belongs to the princess*; dh’èigh i air an dràibhear a’ choidse a stad: *she shouted to the driver to stop the coach*; cha robh iad fada pòsta nuair a bha leanabh-gille aca: *they weren’t long married when they had a baby boy*; a bheil thu a’ dol a thoirt do mhic dhomh?: *are you going to give me your son?*; gum b’ e sin an duais a dh’iarr e: *that that was the reward he wanted*; airson mo thiodhlacadh air an tràigh: *for burying me on the beach*; beatha fhada shitheil: *a long and peaceful life*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Shàbhail thu mo bheatha. **Dè th’ agad orm?:** *you saved my life. What do I owe you? This is a useful idiom, employing the prepositions aig and air. Dè th’ aig Alasdair air Iain? What does John owe Alexander? Tha fichead not agam air ‘he owes me twenty pounds’.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: chaidh aige air a tharraing fhèin seachad air an tiùrr: *he managed to drag himself above the high-tide mark.*

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