

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Cogadh nan Con

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 986. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 682 corresponds to Litir 986.

A bheil sibh eòlach air an abairt *o linn chogadh nan con?* Since the time of the war of the dogs. O linn chogadh nan con. Tha e a’ ciallachadh o chionn fhad’ an t-saoghail. O chian nan cian. Ach dè an cogadh a bh’ ann? Cò na coin a bha a’ sabaid? Uill, chan aithne dhomh le cinnt. Ach bu mhath leam innse dhuibh mu bhatail eadar coin anns an t-seann aimsir ann an sgeulachdan na Fèinne. An e sin an ‘cogadh’?

Bha Fionn agus naoinear eile air a’ bheinn-sheilg leis na coin aca. Bha droch latha aca. Cha robh sgeul air fèidh. Cha robh fios aca carson a bha na fèidh cho gann. Chuir Fionn a chorrag fo a dheud-fios agus fhuair e a-mach gun tigeadh gadhar le cluas bhàn seachad. Chan fhaodadh iad ionnsaigh a thoirt air a’ chù, air neo cha bhiodh sgeul **air an t-seilg** airson latha agus seachd bliadhna.

Nuair a thàinig cù na cluaise bàine seachad, chùm na fir an cuid chon fo smachd. Ach bhris Bran air falbh agus ruaig e an cù eile. Lean Bran air mar a b’ urrainn dha, ach bha cù na cluaise bàine ro luath dha. Bha an t-eagal air Fionn gun sgàineadh Bran a chridhe. Ruith na fir às a dhèidh agus lorg iad Bran a bha na laighe air an fhraoch, agus e claidhte. Cha bhiodh **an t-sealg** aca airson latha agus seachd bliadhna a-nise.

Chaill na daoine an rathad agus aig ciaradh an fheasgair, chunnaic iad solas. Chaidh iad gu bothan agus dh’iarr iad air fear a’ bhothain gum faigheadh iad fasnadh na h-oidhche ann. ‘Gheibheadh sibh fasnadh an seo ged a bhiodh ceud duine agaibh,’ fhreagair fear a’ bhothain.

An ceann tìde, chualas fuaim air an taobh a-muigh. Chaidh fear a’ bhothain a-mach. Cò bha an sin ach mac Rìgh Sheanaidh le ceud gille. Bha e ag iarraidh àite-fuirich airson na h-oidhche. Agus cha robh feachd Fhinn làidir gu leòr airson an cumail a-mach. Thàinig dàrna agus treas mac Rìgh Sheanaidh ann, le ceud gille aig gach duine aca. Agus thàinig nighean Rìgh Sheanaidh cuideachd agus bha ceud maighdeann còmhla rithe. Feumaidh gun robh am bothan loma-làn!

Fhad ’s a bha iad uile ann còmhla, dh’iarr ciad mhac Rìgh Sheanaidh air Fionn gum biodh na coin a’ sabaid. Mar sin, bha Bran air a chur an aghaidh a’ Choin Duibh. Bha an Cù Dubh air cur às do chaogad cù mu-thràth.

Bhuail Fionn Bran le a làimh airson an cù a dhèanamh deiseil. Chrath Fionn a shlabhraidh òir, rinn Bran tabhann agus thog e frioghan air. Chaidh an dà chù aghaidh ri aghaidh, sròn ri sròin agus bha strì fuilteach ann eatarra. Ged a bha iad a’ gluasad gu luath, bha e furasta gu leòr do na daoine a bha gan coimhead, gach cù aithneachadh. Bha an Cù Dubh tapaidh ach le amhaich fhada. Bha e car reamhar,

agus bha spòg cam air. Bha casan buidhe aig Bran, bha a dhà thaobh dubh, bha a bhrù geal agus bha druim uaine air, agus dà chluais chorrach chrò-dhearg.

Mu dheireadh, thuit an Cù Dubh marbh. Bha Bran air a bhith seòlta gu leòr airson a' chùis a dhèanamh air a nàmhaid. Bha cogadh nan con seachad ... ach bidh sinn ga chuimhneachadh fhathast nar cainnt.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: naoinear: *nine people*; ciaradh an fheasgair: *dusk*; chualas: *was heard*; Rìgh Sheanaidh: *The King of Senny*.

Abairtean na Litreach: o chionn fhad' an t-saoghail: *since a very long time ago*; o chian nan cian: *since a very long time ago*; chan aithne dhomh le cinnt: *I don't know with certainty*; mu bhatail eadar coin anns an t-seann aimsir ann an sgeulachdan na Fèinne: *about a battle between dogs in ancient times in the legends of the Fianna*; chuir Fionn a chorrach fo a dheud-fios: *Fionn put his finger under his tooth of knowledge*; fhuair e a-mach gun tigeadh gadhar le cluas bhàn seachad: *he found out that a mastiff with a white ear would come past*; chùm na fir an cuid chon fo smachd: *the men kept their dogs under control*; gun sgàineadh Bran a chridhe: *that Bran would rupture his heart*; na laighe air an fhraoch, agus e claoidhte: *lying on the heather, exhausted*; dh'iarr iad air fear a' bhothain gum faigheadh iad fasnadh na h-oidhche ann: *they asked the man of the bothy for a night's lodging*; feumaidh gun robh am bothan loma-làn: *the bothy must have been bursting at the seams*; an aghaidh a' Choin Duibh: *against the Black Dog*; bha an Cù Dubh air cur às do chaogad cù mu-thràth: *the Black Dog had killed fifty dogs already*; chrath e a shlabhraidh òir: *he shook his golden chain*; rinn Bran tabhann agus thog e frioghan air: *Bran gave a bark and raised his hackles*; tapaidh ach le amhaich fhada: *solid but with a long neck*; car reamhar, agus bha spòg cam air: *a bit fat, and he had a crooked paw*; bha druim uaine air, agus dà chluais chorrach chrò-dhearg: *he had a green back, and two erect, crimson ears*; seòlta gu leòr airson a' chùis a dhèanamh air a nàmhaid: *cunning enough to defeat his enemy*; bha cogadh nan con seachad: *the battle of the dogs was over*; bidh sinn ga chuimhneachadh fhathast nar cainnt: *we still remember it in our speech*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: cha bhiodh sgeul **air an t-seilg**: *there wouldn't be any hunting*. Sealg 'hunting' is a feminine noun (this is demonstrated later in the Litir in cha bhiodh **an t-sealg** aca where the nominative singular form is preceded by t-) so it is slenderised in the dative singular with the article.

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: An ceann tìde: *after a while*.

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