

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Na Sia Bonnaich Bheaga (1)

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 1,033. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 729 corresponds to Litir 1,033.

Halò a-rithist. Bu mhath leam sgeulachd thraidiseanta innse. 'S e an t-ainm a th' oirre 'Na Sia Bonnaich Bheaga'.

Bha mac banntraich ann uaireigin. Dh'fhalbh e a dh'iarraidh fhortain. Thàinig e gu taigh famhair. **Bhuail e an doras.**

'Cò tha siud?' ghlaodh am famhair.

'Tha mi ag iarraidh maighstir,' ars an gille.

'Tha gille a dh'ith orm,' dh'aontaich am famhair. 'Dè an tuarastal a bhiodh tu ag iarraidh?' Dh'ainmich an gille an tuarastal agus bha am famhair toilichte.

Nuair a dh'èirich an gille sa mhadainn, dh'iarr am famhair air na seachd bàthaichean aige a chartadh. Thòisich e air an cartadh. Ach na chuireadh e a-mach air an dàrna doras, thigeadh e a-staigh air an doras eile.

Nuair a thàinig an oidhche, thàinig nighean an fhamhair a-steach. 'Tha thu air do shàrachadh, **a dhuine bhoichd!**' thuir i.

'Tha,' dh'aontaich esan.

'Ma gheallas tu,' ars ise, 'nach bi bean-phòsta agad gu bràth ach mise, nì mise an gnothach dhut.'

'Uill, geallaidh,' thuir an gille.

'Cruinnich, a shluasaid!' ars ise. 'Cuir a-mach, a ghràpa!' An ceann beagan mhionaidean, cha robh càil air fhàgail anns na bàthaichean.

Thàinig am famhair dhachaigh. Chunnaic e gun robh na bàthaichean falamh. 'Mo bheannachd dhut,' thuir e ris a' ghille, 'agus mo mhollachd don oide agad.'

An làrna-mhàireach, bha am famhair a' falbh don bheinn-sheilg. Dh'iarr e air a' ghille na seachd bàthaichean a thughadh le clòimhteach nan eun, gun bun iteig no bàrr iteig a bhith an-àirde.

Fhuair an gille gunna airson eunlaith a mharbhadh. Bha e a' sealg fad an latha. Chan fhac' e ach aon fhaoileag.

Thàinig nighean an fhamhair a-mach, agus thuir i ris, 'Tha thu air do shàrachadh, a dhuine bhoichd!'

'Tha,' ars esan.

'Ma gheallas tu,' ars ise, 'nach bi bean-phòsta agad gu bràth ach mise, nì mise an gnothach dhut.'

'Geallaidh,' thuir an gille.

Thug an nighean trì gràinneanan eòrna a-mach à poca. Thilg i air mullach nam bàthaichean iad. Chruinnich eunlaith air mullaichean nam bàthaichean. Taobh a-staigh beagan mhionaidean, bha iad tugte le clòimhteach.

Thàinig am famhair dhachaigh. Chunnaic e gun robh na bàthaichean tugte. 'Mo bheannachd dhut,' thuir e ris a' ghille, 'agus mo mhollachd don oide agad.'

An làrna-mhàireach, nuair a bha am fahair a' falbh, dh'iarr e air a' ghille each a ghlacadh nach fhaca riamh an talamh no an t-adhar. Thug e srian dha. Chunnaic an gille an t-each, ach cha b' urrainn dha a ghlacadh.

Thàinig nighean an fhamhair a-mach. Thuir i ris, 'Tha thu air do shàrachadh, a dhuine bhoichd!'

'Tha,' ars esan.

'Ma gheallas tu,' ars ise, 'nach bi bean-phòsta agad gu bràth ach mise, nì mise an gnothach dhut.'

'Geallaidh,' thuir an gille.

Thug i srian bheag mheirgeach a-mach à poca. Chrath i ris an each i agus chuir an t-each a cheann innte.

Thàinig am fahair dhachaigh. Chunnaic e gun robh an t-each glacte aig a' ghille. 'Mo bheannachd dhut,' thuir e ris a' ghille, 'agus mo mhollachd don oide agad.' Ghabh e a bhiadh, agus chaidh e a laighe.

Thàinig nighean an fhamhair a bhruidhinn ris a' ghille. Bha droch naidheachd aice. 'Ged a rinn thu a h-uile rud a dh'iarr e,' thuir i, 'tha m' athair a' dol gar marbhadh co-dhiù.' Chuir iad romhpa teicheadh. Ach mus do dh'fhalbh iad, rinn an nighean sia bonnaich bheaga. Chì sinn carson an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: Na Sia Bonnaich Bheaga: *The Six Wee Bannocks*; an làrna-mhàireach: *next day*; eunlaith: *birds*; tughte: *thatched*; srian: *bridle*; meirgeach: *rusty*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Bha mac bantraich ann uaireigin: *there was at one time a widow's son*; dh'fhalbh e a dh'iarraidh fhortain: *he went to seek his fortune*; ghlaodh am fahair: *the giant called*; tha gille a dhìth orm: *I need a servant/lad*; dè an tuarastal a bhiodh tu ag iarraidh?: *what wages would you want?*; dh'iarr am fahair air na seachd bàthaichean aige a chartadh: *the giant asked him to muck out his seven byres*; na chuireadh e a-mach air an dàrna doras, thigeadh e a-staigh air an doras eile: *what he'd put out the first door would come in the other door*; ma gheallas tu nach bi bean-phòsta agad gu bràth ach mise, nì mise an gnothach dhut: *if you promise me that you'll never have another wife but me, I'll do the business for you*; cruinnich, a shluasaid!: *gather, shovel!*; cuir a-mach, a ghràpa!: *put out, fork/grape!*; mo bheannachd dhut agus mo mhollachd don oide agad: *my blessing on you and my curse on your teacher*; a' falbh don bheinn-sheilg: *leaving for the hunting mountain*; na seachd bàthaichean a thughadh le clòimhteach nan eun, gun bun iteig no bàrr iteig a bhith an-àirde: *to thatch the seven byres with bird down, without the base or top of a feather to be exposed*; chan fhac' e ach aon fhaoileag: *he only saw one seagull*; trì gràinneanan eòrna a-mach à poca: *three grains of barley out of her pocket*; dh'iarr e air a' ghille each a ghlacadh nach fhaca riamh an talamh no an t-adhar: *he asked the lad to catch a horse that had never seen ground or sky*; tha m' athair a' dol gar marbhadh co-dhiù: *my father is going to kill us anyway*; chuir iad romhpa teicheadh: *they decided to flee*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Bhuail e an doras:** *he knocked the door. The verb buail, a' bualadh 'strike, hit, knock' in modern usage can often command a noun directly eg bhuail e an uinneag 'he knocked the window'. But it can also be used with prepositions eg buail ann 'collide with, bump into'. I've stuck to modern usage, but when the story was collected in the 19th Century, the storyteller (or collector) used the structure a' bualadh anns an doras.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Tha thu air do shàrachadh, a dhuine bhoichd!: *you are vexed, poor man!*

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