

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Iain mac 'an Mhòir, murtair (2)

*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](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 1,090. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 786 corresponds to Litir 1,090.*

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, thòisich mi an Litir le earrann às a’ Bhìoball: *Ge b’ e a dhòirteas fuil duine, le duine dòirtear fhuil-san*. Bha an cunntas agam mu mhurt Dhòmhnail mhic Uilleim ann an sgìre Chnoc Mhoire faisg air a’ Mhanachainn. Dh’fhàg am murtair, Iain mac 'an Mhòir, agus a bhràthair-chèile, Iain MacCoinnich, a bha cuideachd ciontach, corp Dhòmhnail air a’ chladach.

Anns an sgìre sin, chan eil an sruth mara uabhasach làidir. Trì latha an dèidh a’ mhurt, lorg cìobair an corp. Chaidh a chur don eaglais ann an Cnoc Mhoire. Dh’iarr an siorram, Alasdair Siosalach, air a h-uile inbheach anns an sgìre nochdadh aig an eaglais. Bha eadar sia ceud is seachd ceud duine ann.

Bha corp Dhòmhnail rùisgte, air dèile. Nuair a leugh an siorram ainm gach duine, bha aige no aice ri tighinn air adhart, air beulaibh a h-uile duine eile, agus làmh a chur air broilleach Dhòmhnail. Bha an siorram an dòchas nach cleitheadh am murtair a chiont anns an t-suidheachadh sin.

Thàinig turas **Iain mhic 'an Mhòir**. Chuir e a làmh air broilleach a’ ghille, agus thachair rudeigin annasach. Dh’fhosgail lot air broilleach Dhòmhnail, agus thàinig fuil às. Chaidh iarraidh air Iain a làmh a chur air a’ chorp dàrna turas. Rinn e sin, agus ruith fuil à sròn a’ chuirp.

Bha sin gu leòr airson an t-siorram. Thug iad Iain a-steach don eaglais, agus dh’iarr iad air aideachadh gum b’ esan am murtair. Ach dhiùlt e. Chaidh a chur don phrìosan ann an Inbhir Nis, **gus an aidicheadh** e a chiont.

Mhothaich daoine nach robh sgeul air Iain MacCoinnich. Thàinig aithris gum facas e aig drochaid Inbhir Nis, agus e a’ ceannach tombaca. An uair sin, dh’fhalbh e rathad Shrath Narann.

Bha Iain mac 'an Mhòir air a chur don chip ann an Inbhir Nis – sin rud ris an canar ‘*the stocks*’ ann am Beurla. Bha e an sin, fliuch is fuar, airson ceala-deug. Mu dheireadh, thuit a dhà chois dheth, mar gun robh lannsair air an gearradh dheth. Ghabh cuid truas ris – agus cuimhnichibh nach robh e air am murt aideachadh.

Chaidh Iain a thoirt dhachaigh gu Fionn Ghasg. Mean air mhean, dh’fhàs e na bu làidire. Bha e eadhon comasach air coiseachd air na stùmpaichean coise aige. Chuir a nàbaidhean airgead ri chèile, agus cheannaich iad each dha. Cha robh e comasach air obair a dhèanamh. Bha e na dhèirceach.

Ge-tà, chaidh Iain MacCoinnich a lorg. Bha e a’ fuireach ann am Baile Chè fon ainm ‘Dòmhnall Gàidhealach’. Chaidh a chur an grèim. ’S ann nuair a chunnaic e

seann Eaglais Inbhir Nis a dh'aidich e a chiont. Dh'inns e gur e Iain mac 'an Mhòir a bu choireach ris a' mhurt.

Chaidh an dà Iain a chur air beulaibh britheamh. Fhuair am britheamh ciontach iad. Bha an cinn gu bhith air an gearradh dhiubh, agus air an sealltainn don phoball. Ri taobh na h-eaglaise ann an Cnoc Mhoire, bha ceann Iain MhicCoinnich agus làmh dheas Iain mhic 'an Mhòir air an cur air pòla.

Bha an cunntas dhen ghnòthach air a dhèanamh le pears-eaglais. Aig an deireadh, sgrìobh e: 'S ann mar sin a bha lagh Dhè air a chur an gnìomh – Ge b' e a dhòirteas fuil duine, le duine dòirtear fhuil-san.'

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Cnoc Mhoire: *Kirkhill*; sruth mara: *tidal current*; dh'fhosgail lot: *a wound opened*; dhiùlt: *refused*; gum facas e: *that he was seen*; cip: *stocks (for punishment)*; Fionn Ghasg: *Fingask*; stùmpaichean coise: *stumps of legs*; dèirceach: *beggar*; Baile Chè: *Keith*; pears-eaglais: *member of the clergy*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** às a' Bhìoball: *out of the Bible*; ge b' e a dhòirteas fuil duine, le duine dòirtear fhuil-san: *whoever sheds the blood of humans, by humans shall his blood be shed*; dh'fhàg am murtair agus a bhràthair-chèile corp Dhòmhnail air a' chladach: *the murderer and his brother-in-law left Donald's body on the shore*; lorg cìobair an corp: *a shepherd found the body*; dh'iarr an siorram, Alasdair Siosalach, air a h-uile inbheach anns an sgìre nochdadh aig an eaglais: *the sheriff, Alexander Chisholm, required every adult in the area to appear at the church*; rùisgte, air dèile: *naked and on a plank*; agus làmh a chur air broilleach Dhòmhnail: *and to put a hand on Donald's breast*; nach cleithheadh am murtair a chiont: *that the murderer wouldn't conceal his guilt*; ruith fuil à sròn a' chuirp: *blood flowed from the body's nose*; dh'iarr iad air aideachadh gum b' esan am murtair: *they asked him to admit that he was the murderer*; nach robh sgeul air Iain MacCoinnich: *that there was no sign of John Mackenzie*; dh'fhalbh e rathad Shrath Narann: *he left in the direction of Strathnairn*; thuit a dhà chois dheth, mar gun robh lannsair air an gearradh dheth: *his two feet fell off, as if a surgeon had cut them off him*; ghabh cuid truas ris: *some people felt pity for him*; dh'aidich e a chiont: *he admitted his guilt*; air an sealltainn don phoball: *shown to the people*; 's ann mar sin a bha lagh Dhè air a chur an gnìomh: *thus was God's law exerted*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Thàinig turas **Iain mhic 'an Mhòir**: *the turn came of John son of big John*. Iain mac Iain Mhòir *is the man's full name*. Iain in such a situation often becomes shortened to 'an, and mac is genitivised when the whole phrase is in the genitive, as it is here. Traditionally, for 'Donald MacLeod's cow', we would say *mart Dhòmhnail MhicLeòid*. In a patronymic it is similar. The tractor belonging to Seonaidh mac Phàdraig Bhig would be *tractar Sheonaidh mhic Phàdraig Bhig*. Note that the mac in such a sloinneadh is often dispensed with, and the man referred to as *Seonaidh Phàdraig Bhig*, giving us *tractar Sheonaidh Phàdraig Bhig*.

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** gus an aidicheadh e a chiont: *until he admitted [would admit] his guilt*.

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