

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Fearchar Lighiche (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 1,164. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 860 corresponds to Litir 1,164.

Cò bh' ann am Fearchar Lighiche? An cuala sibh riamh ainm? Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu dheidhinn oir bha e uaireigin car ainmeil, gu h-àraidh ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh. Ach tha ceist ann – am buin e do bheul-aithris no an e fìor dhuine a bh' ann?

Tha am facal *lighiche* a' ciallachadh 'dotair' no 'neach-slànachaidh'. Cha chuala mi riamh ainm Fhearchair ann am Beurla. Eadhon ann am Beurla, bidh daoine a' bruidhinn air *Fearchar Lighiche*. Seo agaibh cunntas air an duine à beul-aithris:

Bha Fearchar na chìobair. Bha e a' fuireach ann an Gleanna Gollaidh. Nise, 's dòcha nach eil sibh eòlach air Gleanna Gollaidh. Mura h-eil, tha mi cinnteach nach ann à Dùthaich MhicAoidh a tha sibh. Tha a h-uile duine anns an sgìre sin, aig a bheil ùidh ann an dualchas na Gàidhlig, eòlach air an òran *Gleanna Gollaidh nan Craobh*. Tha e mar gum biodh na laoidh-sgìre an sin. Bha e air a sgrìobhadh leis a' bhàrd ainmeil, Rob Donn. *Cò chì e nach mol e – Gleanna Gollaidh nan Craobh*. Sgrìobh mi mun dàn ann an Litir 535.

Co-dhiù, air adhart leis an sgeulachd. Chaidh Fearchar gu fèill-reic air a' Ghalltachd. Bha e a' coimhead air an sprèidh agus bha bata calltainn na làimh. Thàinig fear thuige. Bha coltas duin-uasail air. Dh'fhaighnich e de dh'Fhearchar **cà'n d' fhuair e** am bat' aige.

'Ann an Gleanna Gollaidh, ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh,' fhreagair Fearchar.

'Am biodh tu ag aithneachadh na craoibh' às an tàinig e?' dh'fhaighnich an srainnsear.

'Bhitheadh,' dh'aontaich Fearchar, 'nam bithinn faisg oirre.'

'Uill,' lean an duin-usal, 'bheir mi duais mhòr dhut ma thilleas tu don chraoibh ud ann an Gleanna Gollaidh. Thoir sùil airson toll nathrach fòidhpe. **Ma bhios a leithid ann**, fan greis agus chì thu sia nathraichean a' tighinn a-mach às. Na dèan cron sam bith orra. Fan gus an till iad. 'S i an tè mu dheireadh a thilleas – nathair gheal. Gabh greim oirre, thoir thugam i, agus bidh an duais agad.'

Nuair a thill Fearchar dhachaigh, chaidh e chun na craoibhe. Chunnaic e an toll agus, mar a dh'aithris an duin-usal, 's ann a thachair e. Ghabh Fearchar greim air an nathair ghil agus thug e leis i. Choinnich e ris an fhear a bha a' gealltainn duais dha.

Bha am fear sin uabhasach toilichte. Gun dàil chuir e poit air teine agus chuir e an nathair ann. Chuir e ceann air a' phoit. Thuirt e gun robh aige ri falbh speileag. Dh'iarr e air Fearchar sùil a chumail air a' phoit airson dèanamh cinnteach nach

cuireadh i thairis. Ach thuir e nach fhaodadh Fearchar buntainn ris an stuth a bha na broinn.

Cha robh am fear air falbh fada nuair a thòisich an t-uisge anns a' phoit air goil. Bha e a' coimhead coltach gun robh ceann na poite gu bhith a' leum dhith. Dh'fheuch Fearchar ri stad a chur air. Ach chaidh uisge goileach às a' phoit thairis air tè de na corragan aige. Chaidh a chorrag a losgadh.

Stob Fearchar a' chorrag na bheul. Thàinig an dà latha air sa mhionaid sin. Thuig e bho sin a-mach mar a dhèanadh e leigheas air gach tinneas anns an t-saoghal. Ach an robh an duin-uasal toilichte? Uill, cha robh – mar a chì sinn an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: lighiche: *physician, healer*; ciobair: *shepherd [or, given the historical period, perhaps a cowherd]*; Gleanna Gollaidh: *Glengolly*; thuige: *to him*; nathraichean: *snakes*; goileach: *boiling*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha e uaireigin car ainmeil, gu h-àraidh ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh: *he was at one time somewhat famous, particularly in the Mackay Country [North Sutherland]*; am buin e do bheul-aithris no an e fìor dhuine a bh' ann?: *does he belong to oral tradition or was he a real person?*; eadhon ann am Beurla: *even in English*; tha e mar gum biodh na laoidh-sgìre an sin: *it's somewhat of a local anthem there*; rinn e eilthreachd: *he emigrated*; cò chì e nach mol e?: *who sees it and doesn't praise it?*; fèill-reic air a' Ghalltachd: *a sale in the Lowlands*; bha e a' coimhead air an sprèidh: *he was looking at the livestock*; bha bata calltainn na làimh: *he had a hazel stick in his hand*; am biodh tu ag aithneachadh na craoibh' às an tàinig e: *would you recognise the tree it came from*; nam bithinn faisg oirre: *if I were close to it*; bheir mi duais mhòr dhut: *I'll give you a big reward*; thoir sùil airson toll nathrach fòidhpe: *look for a snake burrow beneath it*; mar a dh'aithris an duin-uasal, 's ann a thachair e: *as the gentleman said, so it happened*; gun robh aige ri falbh speileag: *that he had to leave for a short while*; airson dèanamh cinnteach nach cuireadh i thairis: *to make sure it wouldn't overflow*; nach fhaodadh X buntainn ris an stuth a bha na broinn: *that X might not touch the stuff inside it*; stob X a' chorrag na bheul: *X shoved the finger into his mouth*; mar a dhèanadh e leigheas air gach tinneas anns an t-saoghal: *how he would cure every illness in the world*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Dh'fhaighnich e de dh'Fhearchar cà'n d' fhuair e am bat' aige: *he asked Fearchar where he got his stick*. Note, that as in languages across the world, we often shorten phrases in speech. Try and learn some of these as they will make your Gaelic sound more natural and idiomatic. Cà is short for càite 'where' and is extremely common in speech e.g. cà bheil thu? 'where are you?'; cà'l Seonaidh? 'where is Seonaidh?' – in the last 'bheil' is also shortened. In the example in the Litir the 'n' might hardly be heard in speech so it will sound like 'cà d' fhuair e'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Ma bhios a leithid ann: *if there is the like [such a thing] there*.

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