

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Fearchar Lighiche (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 1,166. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 862 corresponds to Litir 1,166.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Fhearchar Lighiche. Air an rathad dhachaigh a Ghleanna Gollaidh, chaidh Fearchar gu doras caisteal an Rìgh agus dh'èigh e, 'A' bhiast-dubh air a' chnàmh gheal.' Air a' chiad shealladh, tha sin a' ciallachadh 'the otter on the white bone'. Tha an abairt annasach, nach eil, ged a bha na seann Ghàidheil a' creidsinn gun robh draoidheachd co-cheangailte ri bian an dòbhrain.

Tha dreach eile air an abairt anns an aon sgeul, mar a chaidh aithris ann an cruinneachadh Iain Òig Ìle, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*. Anns an dreach sin, tha Fearchar ag ràdh, 'An daol dubh ris a' chnàmh gheal'. Tha sin a' ciallachadh 'the black beetle on the white bone'. Tha sin eadar-dhealaichte! Leis gun robh eòlas an lighiche aig Fearchar a-nise, bha e a' tuigsinn gun robh lighichean an Rìgh a' cur daolan no daolagan air an lot ann an cas an Rìgh. Bha na daolagan ag ithe na feòla agus eadhon ag ithe a' chnàimh fhèin. Agus bha e cho piantail 's gun robh an Rìgh **ag èigheachd 's a' speuradh** fad na h-ùine.

Anns an dreach seo dhen sgeul, tha Fearchar a' dèanamh leigheas air an Rìgh. Agus tha an Rìgh a' **crochadh gu bàs gach lighiche aige**. Ge-tà, chan eil cùisean ro mhath do dh'Fhearchar aig a' cheann thall. Ged a tha e a' faighinn duais mhòr fearainn bhon Rìgh, tha e air a phuinnseanachadh le cuideigin agus chan eil e beò ro fhada.

Ma tha sibh eòlach air sgeulachdan na Fèinne, bidh sibh a' dèanamh coimeas leis mar a fhuair Fionn mac Cumhail a chuid eòlais. An àite nathair gheal, 's e bradan a bha sa phoit. Chaidh iarraidh air Fionn sùil a chumail air a' phoit, gun a bhith ag ithe dad. Agus 's ann le bhith a' gabhail blasad dhen bhradan a fhuair Fionn a thuigse air a h-uile càil. Tha e gu math coltach gu bheil an dà sgeul ceangailte ri chèile.

Agus tha nathair gheal a' nochdadh ann am beul-aithris eile. Mar eisimpleir, tha Iain Òg Ìle ag innse dhuinn mun Olladh Ìleach no 'Islay Doctor'. Bha triùir bhràithrean às Ìle air an robh MacBheatha no Peutan mar ainm. Bha iad uile ainmeil airson an cuid sgilean mar lighichean.

Chaidh fear dhiubh, Iain, a dh'fhuireach ann am Muile. 'S e an t-Olladh Muileach a chanadh daoine ris. Tha e air a thiodhlacadh ann an Eilean Ì. Dh'fhuirich an dàrna fear, Fearghas, ann an Ìle. B' esan an t-Olladh Ìleach. B' e an treas fear – Gilleadha – am fear a b' ainmeile. Bha e na shàr-eòlaiche air luibhean, agus bhiodh e a' cruinneachadh lusain fiadhain airson Fhearghais.

Seo mar a fhuair an treas bràthair a chuid eòlais air luibhean. Latha a bha seo, bha coire aige air teine. Bha e a' goil luibhean. Ach chaidh nathair gheal a chur don

phoit. Bha Gilleadha a' cur a' bhrota mun chuairt nuair a chaidh balgam dheth air a làimh. Bha e teth agus dh'imlich an duine a làmh.

Sa mhionaid, bha eòlas sònraichte aige air a h-uile leigheas fon ghrèin. Chaidh iarraidh air a dhol a dhèanamh leigheas air Rìgh na h-Alba. Ach bha farmad aig lighichean eile air. Chaidh a phuinnseanachadh agus cha do thill e a dh'Ìle a-chaidh.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: lighiche: *physician, healer*; coimeas: *comparison*; bradan: *salmon*; blasad: *taste*; beul-aithris: *oral tradition*; Iain Òg Ìle: *John Francis Campbell [folklorist]*; balgam: *drop*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Air an rathad dhachaigh a Ghleanna Gollaidh: *on the way home to Glengolly*; air a' chiad shealladh: *on [the] first view*; tha an abairt annasach, nach eil?: *the phrase is strange, isn't it?*; ged a bha na seann Ghàidheil a' creidsinn gun robh draoidheachd co-cheangailte ri bian an dòbhrain: *although the old Gaels were believing that magic was connected to the otter's skin*; bha e a' tuigsinn gun robh lighichean an Rìgh a' cur daolan no daolagan air an lot ann an cas an Rìgh: *he was understanding that the King's physicians were putting beetles on the wound on the King's leg*; ged a tha e a' faighinn duais mhòr fearainn bhon Rìgh, tha e air a phuinnseanachadh le cuideigin: *although he receives a large land grant from the King, he is poisoned by somebody*; bha trìuir bhràithrean às Ìle air an robh MacBheatha no Peutan mar ainm: *there were three brothers from Islay called Beaton*; chaidh fear dhiubh, Iain, a dh'fhuireach ann am Muile: *one of them, John, went to live on Mull*; bha e na shàr-eòlaiche air luibhean: *he was an expert on herbs*; bhiodh e a' cruinneachadh lusain fiadhain airson Fhearghais: *he would collect wild plants for Fergus*; bha X a' cur a' bhrota mun chuairt: *X was stirring the soup*; dh'imlich an duine a làmh: *the man licked his hand*; sa mhionaid, bha eòlas sònraichte aige air a h-uile leigheas fon ghrèin: *immediately, he had a special knowledge of every medical cure in the universe*; bha farmad aig lighichean eile air: *other physicians were jealous of him*; chaidh a phuinnseanachadh agus cha do thill e a dh'Ìle a-chaidh: *he was poisoned and he never returned to Islay*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: a' crochadh gu bàs gach lighiche aige: *hanging [to the death] every one of his doctors. You might be used to using a h-uile as an equivalent to the English 'all, every one'. But note that gach 'each' can also be used to mean 'every'. Bha e ann gach latha 'he was there every day'. Bha gach leisgeul fon ghrèin aca 'they had every excuse imaginable'. You can also use gach in an emphatic way e.g. thug i taing do gach aon dhiubh 'she thanked each and every one of them'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: ag èigheachd 's a' speuradh: *shouting and swearing*.

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