

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Bàs Aonghais Mhòir

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 fios@learngaelic.scot. This is Litir 1,178. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 874 corresponds to Litir 1,178.

Anns an t-seann aimsir, nuair a bha daoine ri cogadh, bhiodh iad uaireannan a’ cur teine ris an tughadh ann an taighean. Dh’fhaodadh iad sin a dhèanamh aig astar – le bogha is saighead. Ach dè chuireadh iad ris an t-saighead airson teine a chur ri mullach tughaidh? Chuireadh spong a bha a’ losgadh. Tha mi a’ ciallachadh le sin ‘tinder’ no an ‘tinder fungus’. Spong.

Tha a leithid ann an sgeul goirid à Àird nam Murchan. ’S e ainm an sgeòil Bàs Aonghais Mhòir. Tha e co-cheangailte ri Aonghas Mòr mac ’ic Eòin. Tha e a’ gabhail àite aig deireadh an t-siathamh linn deug.

Bha Aonghas a’ fuireach faisg air Sròn an t-Sìthein. Bha dìg timcheall an taigh aige. Cha robh e furasta do dhaoine le droch rùn faighinn faisg air an taigh. Ach gheibheadh iad faisg gu leòr airson saighead le spong a losgadh air.

’S e sin a thachair do thaigh Aonghais Mhòir. Carson? Uill, ’s e murtair a bh’ ann an Aonghas. Rinn feadhainn eile dìoghaltas air. Seo mar a thachair e.

Bha droch bhean aig Aonghas. Co-dhiù, ’s e sin a tha na sgeulaichean – fir, tha mi cinnteach – a’ cumail a-mach. Bhiodh i ag iarraidh air Aonghas e fhèin a shuidheachadh mar cheannard na fine – Dòmhnallaich Àird nam Murchan.

Chuala iad gun robh *nephew* aig Aonghas – Dòmhnall – gu bhith a’ pòsadh nighean aig a’ cheann-chinnidh chumhachdach, Camshron Loch Iall. Bhiodh an gille òg na b’ urramaiche na Aonghas an uair sin. Cha bhiodh cothrom aig Aonghas tuilleadh a bhith na cheannard fine. ‘Ist,’ thuirt bean Aonghais ris, ‘’s ann a bhios tu a’ tarraing nan cliabh mòine dha fhathast!’ Dh’iarr i air an duine aice Dòmhnall a mhurt.

Bha fios aig Aonghas gum biodh Dòmhnall a’ gabhail slighe a dh’ionnsaigh na bannse tarsainn fadhail aig Ceann Trà. Bha aige ri leum tarsainn na fadhach. Nuair a bha e a’ leum, loisg fear de luchd-leantainn Aonghais saighead air aodann.

Nuair a bhuail a chasan air an talamh, shiaraich Dòmhnall mar gun robh e a’ dannsadh. An uair sin thuit e. Thuirt Aonghas ris, ‘Saoil an danns thu cho cridheil sin aig banais nighean Cham-na-Eanraich?!’

Bha sin mì-mhodhail. An àite ‘Chamshronaich’, thuirt e ‘Cham-na-Eanraich’ ‘*the bent one of the meat broth*’. Bha e a’ dèanamh iomradh air mar a bhiodh na Camshronaich gu tric a’ togail creach.

Chaidh an ceòl air feadh na fìdhle nuair nach do nochd Dòmhnall aig a’ bhanais. Chaidh buidheann de dhaoine air thòir Aonghais. Theich e bhon taigh aige. Ach loisg na daoine saigheadan le spong air a’ mhullach. Chaidh an taigh na smàl.

Theich Aonghas gu àite ann am Morbhairne. Ach lean an fheadhainn eile e. Anns a' mhadainn, bha a' ghrian ag èirigh anns an àird an ear. 'S ann bhon àird an ear a bha na nàimhdean a' tighinn. Thog Aonghas a chlogaid airson coimhead, agus làmh aige a' cumail solas na grèine bho a shùilean.

Thuirt fear de a nàimhdean, 'Nach e deagh chothrom a tha seo a mharbhadh?' Fhreagair fear eile, 'Chan i do làmh leibideach a leagadh an duine foghainteach.'

'Ge-tà,' thuirt a' chiad fhear, 'Nach dèanadh saighead e?' Loisg e an t-saighead. Bhuail i Aonghas na bhathais, agus mharbh i e. Agus sin agaibh sgeul Bàs Aonghais Mhòir.

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Faclan na Litreach: spong: *tinder, tinder fungus*; Àird nam Murchan: *Ardnamurchan*; Sròn an t-Sithein: *Strontian*; murtair: *murderer*; droch bhean: *a bad wife*; clogaid: *helmet*; bathais: *forehead*.

Abairtean na Litreach: nuair a bha daoine ri cogadh: *when people were involved in warfare*; bhiodh iad uaireannan a' cur teine ris an tughadh: *they would sometimes set fire to the thatch*; dh'fhaodadh iad sin a dhèanamh aig astar – le bogha is saighead: *they could do that at a distance – with a bow and arrow*; rinn feadhainn eile dìoghaltas air: *some other people took revenge on him*; ag iarraidh air Aonghas e fhèin a shuidheachadh mar cheannard na fine: *wanting Angus to position himself as the clan chief*; bhiodh an gille òg na b' urramaiche na Aonghas: *the young lad would be more respected than Angus*; 's ann a bhios tu a' tarraing nan cliabh mòine dha fhathast: *you'll be hauling peat creels for him yet*; a' gabhail slighe a dh'ionnsaigh na bainnse tarsainn fadhail aig Ceann Trà: *taking a route to the wedding across a sand-ford at Kentra*; bha aige ri leum tarsainn na fadhlach: *he had to leap across the ford*; shiaraich Dòmhnall mar gun robh e a' dannsadh: *Donald staggered as if he were dancing*; saoil an danns thu cho cridheil sin aig banais nighean Cham-na-Eanraich?: *do you reckon you'll dance as merrily as that at the wedding of the daughter of the bent one of the meat broth?*; a' dèanamh iomradh air mar a bhiodh na Camshronaich gu tric a' togail creach: *making mention of how the Camerons would often plunder [cattle]*; air thòir Aonghais: *in pursuit of Angus*; agus làmh aige a' cumail solas na grèine bho a shùilean: *with his hand shading his eyes from the sun*; chan i do làmh leibideach a leagadh an duine foghainteach: *it's not your trifling hand that would fell the powerful man*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Chuala iad gun robh *nephew* aig Aonghas – Dòmhnall – gu bhith a' pòsadh nighean aig a' cheann-chinnidh chumhachdach, Camshron Loch Iall: *they heard that a nephew of Angus – Donald – was going to marry a daughter of the powerful clan chief, Cameron of Lochiel. Why have I used the English word nephew here? The answer is that, because Gaelic relationships are usually expressed with greater accuracy, we would normally say mac a bhràthar 'his brother's son' or mac a pheathar 'his sister's son'. The story as I accessed it, through translation, gives 'nephew' without explaining the relationship, so I couldn't express the relationship except with 'nephew'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Chaidh an ceòl air feadh na fìdhle: *the proverbial hit the fan [idiom]*.

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