

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Na h-Amhaisgean (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. This is Litir 642. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 338 corresponds to Litir 642.

Tha mi ag innse dhuibh na seann sgeulachd *Na h-Amhaisgean* no *Na Trì Saighdearan*. Thill am boireannach don t-seòmar leis an t-solas. Bha an dàrna saighdear air an ceathramh muilt a chur na mhàileid airson a chompanaich.

“Bu neònach e gun tug thu an solas air falbh,” thuir an saighdear.

“Is neònach an duine nach amaiseadh air a bheul co-dhiù bhiodh e dorch no soilleir,” fhreagair i. “Chan fhaod e a bhith gun do dh’ith an coigreach beag an ceathramh muilt.”

Dh’iarr i an fheòil suas is sìos. Mu dheireadh, lorg i na mhàileid i. Bha i mì-thoilichte. Dh’iarr i gum biodh an saighdear air a thilgeil am measg nan con mòra. Cha d’ fhuair e ri ithe an sin ach cnàmhan.

Bha an treas saighdear fhathast ri taobh a’ chnuic a’ feitheamh ri a chompanach. An ath mhadainn chunnaic e an cù ruadh. Chaidh e às dèidh a’ choin. Cha robh e fad’ sam bith ga leantainn nuair a chunnaic e an caisteal. Chaidh e timcheall a’ chaisteil, a’ coimhead airson doras, nuair a chunnaic e am boireannach ciatach aig an uinneig. Smèid i air. Chaidh e don doras chùil agus leig i a-steach e.

Thugadh gu seòmar brèagha e far an robh biadh air a chur air a bheulaibh. Am measg a’ bhìdh, bha buileann cruithneachd – lofa mòr de dh’aran. Thug am boireannach an solas air falbh. Ach cha robh aig an t-saighdear ri duine sam bith a chuimhneachadh agus cha do chuir e dad na mhàileid. Nuair a thill am boireannach leis an t-solas, bha a h-uile rud ann an òrdugh.

Thàinig an oidhche agus chaidh an saighdear a laighe. Ach cha d’ fhuair e cadal. Bha fuaim mòr an ath dhoras de cheòl is aighear. An ath mhadainn, thuir e ris a’ bhoireannach, “Cò iad na daoine siud a bha **ri ceòl is aighear**, nach do leig mi a dhol a chadal fad na h-oidhche?”

“Is iad sin na h-Amhaisgean,” fhreagair i. “Tha mi an seo airson latha is bliadhna. Ghoid na h-Amhaisgean mi agus thug iad an seo mi. ’S e nighean rìgh a th’ annam ann an Rìoghachd na Fuarachd.”

Air an oidhche sin, thòisich an ceòl is aighear a-rithist agus cha d’ fhuair an saighdear cadal sam bith. Dh’èirich e agus chaidh e far an robh na h-Amhaisgean airson gearan. Nuair a chunnaic iad aig an doras e, rinn iad uile gàire.

“**Dè fàth ur gàire?**” ars esan.

“Tha gum bi do cheann fhèin na bhall-coise dhuinn a-nochd,” fhreagair iad. Rinn an saighdear fhèin gàire. “Dè fàth do ghàire fhèin?” ars iadsan.

Thuir esan gun gabhadh e am fear a bu mhotha aig an robh ceann agus a bu chaoil' aig an robh casan agus gun gabhadh e dhaibh leis. Rinn e sin gus an robh an seòmar falamh is sàmhach. Chaidh an saighdear a laighe ach, an ceann greis, thòisich an ùpraid cheudna. Chaidh an saighdear an ath dhoras, fhuair e greim air an fhear a bu mhotha aig an robh ceann agus a bu chaoil' aig an robh casan agus ghabh e dhaibh leis gus an robh an t-àite falamh.

Am measg na h-ùpraid, rinn am boireannach a dol-às. Mus do theich i, gheall i don t-saighdear gun tilleadh i le a h-athair is le maighdeannan coimheadach airson a phòsadh. Agus chì sinn de thachair an-ath-sheachdain.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: amhaisg: *awisk*; ciatach: *elegant*; falamh: *empty*; sàmhach: *quiet*; dol-às: *escape*; smèid: *waved*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha X air an ceathramh muilt a chur na mhàileid: *X had put the quarter of mutton in his bag*; bu neònach e: *it was strange*; is neònach an duine nach amaiseadh air a bheul co-dhiù bhiodh e dorch no soilleir: *strange is the man who couldn't find his mouth whether it's dark or light*; chan fhaod e a bhith: *it can't be*; cha d' fhuair e ri ithe an sin ach cnàmhan: *he got nothing to eat there but bones*; chaidh às dèidh a' choin: *he went after the dog*; cha robh e fad' sam bith ga leantainn: *he wasn't following him long*; smèid i air: *she waved to him*; am measg a' bhìdh, bha buileann cruithneachd: *amongst the food, there was a large wheaten loaf*; bha a h-uile rud ann an òrdugh: *everything was as it should be*; chaidh an saighdear a laighe: *the soldier went in order to sleep*; 's e nighean rìgh a th' annam ann an Rìoghachd na Fuarachd: *I am a king's daughter in the Kingdom of Coldness*; gum bi do cheann fhèin na bhall-coise dhuinn: *that your own head will be a football for us*; gun gabhadh e am fear a bu mhotha aig an robh ceann agus a bu chaoil' aig an robh casan: *that he would take the man with the largest head and the slenderest legs*; gun gabhadh e dhaibh leis: *that he would take to them with him (beat them with him)*; an ùpraid cheudna: *the same commotion*; le a h-athair is le maighdeannan coimheadach airson a phòsadh: *with her father and attendant maidens to marry him*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Cò iad na daoine siud a bha ri ceòl is aighear?: *who were those people who were involved in music and merriment? The preposition ri is a very handy and flexible one – and easy to use for learners. In this idiomatic usage it means “engaged in, involved in, occupied in doing”. It is used informally a lot eg dè tha thu ris? (what are you up to?); bha i ri buachailleachd (she was herding [cattle]); bha e fhèin 's a chàirdean ri smocadh cainb (he and his friends were involved in smoking marijuana); bha mi ri maorach an-dè (I was occupied in [gathering] shellfish yesterday); bidh e ri fealla-dhà gu tric (he's often involved in fun, nonsense). Note that ri does not lenite the following noun.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Dè fàth ur gàire?: *what is the purpose of your laughter?*

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