

# *Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh*

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at 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, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk) \**

Chan eil mòran daoine air fhàgail ann an Diùra aig a bheil Gàidhlig an-diugh, ach tha dìleab phrìseil aig an eilean co-cheangailte ris a’ chànan. Chaidh seann sgeulachdan a chruinneachadh ann agus bu mhath leam tè dhiubh sin innse dhuibh an-diugh, ged a tha i nas giorra agamsa nan tè a chaidh aithris o shean.

Tha i co-cheangailte ri dà theaghlach a tha fhathast anns an eilean. Clann 'ic Ille Riabhaich no na Darrochs mar a chanas iad riutha ann am Beurla, agus Clann 'ic Ille Bhuidhe - na Buies. O chionn fhada bha fear de Chloinn 'ic Ille Riabhaich ann a bha mòr agus làidir. Bha e math air sabaid, agus dh'iarr Iarla Earra-Ghaidheal air Eilean Cholasa a ghabhail thairis as a leth. Airson sin, ge-tà, dh'fheumadh e cur às don fheadhainn aig an robh smachd air Colasa – Clann 'ic a' Phì.

Rinn Mac Ille Riabhaich deiseil, ach chuala fear eile ann an Diùra mu dheidhinn. B' esan Mac Ille Bhuidhe. Nuair a thàinig an là airson falbh a Cholasa ann am bìrlinn, chaidh Mac Ille Bhuidhe a dh'ionnsaigh Mhic Ille Riabhaich agus dh'fhaighnich e dheth am faigheadh e fhèin cothrom dhol a dh'Ìle còmhla ris. Cha do leig e air gu robh fios aige gu robh iad a' dol a Cholasa.

Nuair a ràinig iad Ìle, thuir Mac Ille Riabhaich gu robh iad a' leantainn orra gu ruige Colasa, agus dh'iarr Mac Ille Bhuidhe air fuireach air bòrd. Nuair a ràinig iad Colasa, rinn sgioba Mhic Ille Riabhaich air an taigh mhòr airson cur às do Chloinn 'ic a' Phì. Chum Mac Ille Bhuidhe pìos beag air falbh, ach chunnaic e boireannach òg a' ruith a-mach às an taigh mhòr le rudeigin fo a h-achlais. 'S e a bh' ann leanabh-gille, an duine mu dheireadh a bha beò anns an teaghlach as dèidh na sgrios.

Chuir Mac Ille Bhuidhe an leanabh fo a chuid aodaich agus chaidh e air ais don bhìrlinn. Bha e ag iomradh còmhla ri càch nuair a bhris an ràmh aige. Bhuail a làmh an leanabh a bha aig a bhroilleach, agus leig am fear beag èigh a-mach. Chuala Mac Ille Riabhaich e agus thuir e, “tha arrabhalach sa bhàta!”

“Chan eil ann,” fhreagair Mac Ille Bhuidhe, “ach dìosgan nan ràmh.”

Thug iad ràmh eile dha, ach bhris e sin cuideachd. An uairsin thug iad am buirbid mòr dha – an ràmh mòr a bhathar a' cleachdadh airson bìrlinn a stiùireadh. Thug Mac Ille Bhuidhe a' bhìrlinn a-steach gu tìr ann an Diùra mus do mhothaich càch gu robh iad faisg air a' chladach. Chleachd e an ràmh airson leum air tìr agus, mus robh cothrom aig duine sam bith eile gluasad, bha e air a' chladach deiseil dhaibh le chladheamh.

“Cha b' fhuilear dhut, Mhic Ille Bhuidhe, a bhith cho ealamh,” thuir Mac Ille Riabhaich.

“Thigibh air tìr a-nise,” fhreagair Mac Ille Bhuidhe, “tha mi deiseil air ur son.” Thog e an leanabh suas, ag innse dhaibh gur e oighre Mhic a’ Phì Cholasa a bh’ ann, agus nach fhaigheadh duine aca greim air.

Cha robh càch deònach sabaid leis ach b’ fheudar do Mhac Ille Bhuidhe teicheadh leis an leanabh agus chuir e am falach e ann an uamh air cliathaich Beinn an Òir, a’ bheinn as àirde ann an Diùra. Nuair a thàinig an gille gu ìre, fhuair e Eilean Cholasa air ais, airson greis co-dhiù, agus bhathar ag ràdh, nan robh taic a dhìth air Mac Ille Bhuidhe, nach robh aige ach teine mòr a thogail a chitheadh muinntir Cholasa, agus chuireadh iad sgioba de ghaisgich ga ionnsaigh airson a chuideachadh.

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**Faclan na seachdainne:** Diùra: *Jura*; nas giorra: *shorter*; o shean: *a long time ago, in the old days*; Clann ’ic a’ Phì: *the MacPhees*; bìrlinn: *galley*; a dh’ionnsaigh: *towards*; Ìle: *Islay*; leanabh-gille: *baby boy*; ràmh: *oar*; arrabhalach: *stowaway (traitor)*; oighre: *heir*.

**Abairtean na seachdainne:** tha dìleab phrìseil co-cheangailte ris a’ chànan: *there is a valuable legacy associated with the language*; bu mhath leam tè dhiubh sin innse dhuibh: *I would like to tell you one of them (fem.)*; dh’iarr Iarla Earra-Ghaidheal air Eilean Cholasa a ghabhail thairis as a leth: *The Earl of Argyll asked him to take over the Isle of Colonsay on this behalf*; cha do leig e air gu robh fios aige: *he didn’t let on that he knew*; gu robh iad a’ leantainn orra gu ruige Colasa: *that they were continuing on to Colonsay*; rinn X air an taigh mhòr airson cur às do Y: *X made for the big house to kill Y*; le rudeigin fo a h-achlais: *with something under her arm*; an duine mu dheireadh a bha beò anns an teaghlach: *the last person in the family who was alive*; fo a chuid aodaich: *under his clothes*; bha e ag iomradh còmhla ri càch: *he was rowing along with the others*; bhuail a làmhan an leanabh a bh’ aig a bhroilleach: *his hands hit the baby who was at his breast [under his clothes]*; dìosgan nan ràmh: *the creaking of the oars*; a bhathar a’ cleachdadh airson bìrlinn a stiùireadh: *which was used to steer the galley*; bha e deiseil dhaibh le chladheamh: *he was ready for them with his sword*; b’ fheudar do X teicheadh: *X had to flee*; chuir e am falach e ann an uamh air cliathaich Beinn an Òir: *he hid him in a cave on the side of Beinn an Òir (mountain of the gold)*; nach robh aige ach teine mòr a thogail a chitheadh muinntir Cholasa: *he only had to light a fire which the Colonsay folk would see*.

**Puing-ghràmar na seachdainne:** chuireadh iad sgioba de ghaisgich ga ionnsaigh airson a chuideachadh: *they would send him a team of heroes to help him. The last 3 words are what I want to concentrate on here – airson a chuideachadh. The “a” is the masculine 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular possessive adjective and it therefore lenites the following word which, although it is an infinitive form of a verb, acts in the same way as a noun (it is in fact a form of verbal noun). A direct translation would be “for his helping”. The feminine equivalent (“for her helping” ie “in order to help her”) would be airson a cuideachadh. It works similarly for all other persons, leniting where appropriate ie after mo and do: tha iad an seo airson mo chur an greim (they are here to arrest me); tha mi airson do shàbhaladh (I want to save you); tha iad airson ar fàgail an seo (they want to leave us here); a bheil iad airson ur tràigsinn? (do they want to abandon you?); tha sinn airson an cuideachadh (we want to help them).*

**Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne:** Cha b’ fhuilear dhut a bhith cho ealamh: *you needed to be [so] sprightly. This is an old expression, and a little obtuse because of its negative structure, but it is still heard from time to time. Chan fhuilear dhut: you need/require.*

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