

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh **le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

## **Gàidhlig ann an Innis Tìle**

*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.macleam@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 633. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 329 corresponds to Litir 633.*

Bha mi ann an dùthaich bhrèagha làn bheanntan àrda o chionn beagan seachdainean. Tha cànan is cultar àraidh aig an t-sluagh. Chuala mi gu bheil geamhradh aca a mhaireas naoi mìosan, is tha sin air a leantainn le trì mìosan de dhroch shìde! Chan eil mi a’ bruidhinn mu Ghàidhealtachd na h-Alba ach mu Innis Tìle, nàbaidh a tha fada tuath oirnn.

Bidh mi a’ dol a Lochlann gu math tric. Chan eil àite ann an Lochlann nach do chòrd rium. Ach feumaidh mi ràdh gun do lorg mi rudeigin ann an Innis Tìle nach do lorg mi idir ann an Nirribhidh, san t-Suain, san Danmharq no san Fhionnlainn. ’S e sin gu bheil ceanglaichean eachdraidheil ann – a tha ’s dòcha beò ann an dualchas nan daoine fhathast gu **ìre air choreigin** – eadar an dùthaich Lochlannach sin agus na Gàidheil.

Chuir e iongnadh orm cho tric ’s a dh’èirich ceanglaichean leis an dualchas agam fhìn an seo air a’ Ghàidhealtachd. Uaireannan ’s e dualchas Lochlannach na h-Alba a bu choireach ri sin. Uaireannan, ge-tà, bha na Gàidheil – Albannach agus Èireannach – ann mar thaibhsean trìd-shoilleir a’ gluasad thar dùthaich dhorch gharbh Innis Tìle.

Air a’ chiad mhadainn ann an Reykjavik, gu dearbh, chuireadh nam chuimhne mar a tha sinn nar nàbaidhean do chèile. Bha mi nam shuidhe faisg air doras mòr an taigh-òsta againn nuair a chuala mi cànan a b’ aithne dhomh. Roimhe sin, bha measgachadh de Thìlis is Beurla ann. An uair sin chuala mi i. Mo chànan fhèin – a’ Ghàidhlig! **Bhioraich mi mo chluasan.** Choimhead mi air mo mhac (bha mi ann còmhla ris an teaghlach agam). “A’ Ghàidhlig, nach e?” thuirt mi ris ann an cagair. “’S e,” fhreagair e. Chan e aisling a bh’ ann. Cha robh mi nam chadal. Choimhead mi air an fheadhainn a bha ga bruidhinn. Bha còmhlan ann – boireannach agus grunn dheugairean – agus bha iad a’ còmhradh ann an Gàidhlig na h-Alba.

“Nach math sin,” dh’èigh mi orra, “a bhith a’ cluinntinn na Gàidhlig ann an Reykjavik!” Chuir mi iongnadh orra. ’S e a bh’ annta buidheann à Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu air turas a dh’Innis Tìle agus bha mi toilichte an coinneachadh. Thachair gun do choinnich sinn riutha a-rithist nuair a bha sinn air ar cuairt tro cheann a deas an eilein. Aig ionad turasachd a-muigh air an dùthaich bha barrachd Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn na bha de Thìlis no Beurla airson, uill, cairteal na h-uarach co-dhiù.

Nuair a bha sinn a’ còmhradh, dh’fhaighnich mi dhiubh mun turas aca. Dh’ainmich iad na Vestmannaeyjar – na h-Eileanan Westmann – far an robh iad an

latha roimhe. Bha an tidsear aca à Barraigh. An robh na h-eileanan sin coltach ri Barraigh, dh'fhaighnich mi. “Uill, chan eil buileach,” fhreagair i, “ach tha iad gu math inntinneach.” Roghnaich sinn a dhol ann. 'S toigh leam eileanan agus, mar Albannach, tha e nàdarrach a bhith ag iarraidh falbh a-mach gu eileanan. Air an làrna-mhàireach 's e sin a rinn sinn. Agus abair àite.

Anns a' chiad dol a-mach chan eil na h-eileanan coltach ri Barraigh. Chan eil iad cho brèagha ri Barraigh. Chan eil tràighean bàna ann idir. Ach tha iad iongantach ann an iomadh dòigh. Agus 's ann anns na h-Eileanan Westmann a thachair mi ris an dàrna taibhs Gàidhealach, mar a mhìnichas mi an-ath-sheachdain.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Innis Tìle: *Iceland*; Lochlann: *Scandinavia*; cagair: *whisper*; aisling: *dream*; Barraigh: *Barra*; tràighean bàna: *white beaches*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** làn bheanntan àrda: *full of high mountains*; o chionn beagan seachdainean: *a few weeks ago*; gu bheil geamhradh aca a mhaireas naoi mìosan: *that they have a winter that lasts nine months*; air a leantainn le trì mìosan de dhroch shìde: *followed by three months of bad weather*; nàbaidh a tha fada tuath oirnn: *a neighbour that's a long way to the north of us*; nach do chòrd rium: *that I didn't enjoy*; chuir e iongnadh orm cho tric 's a dh'èirich ceanglaichean: *I was surprised at how often links appeared*; mar thaibhsean trid-shoilleir: *like transparent ghosts*; thar dùthaich dhorch gharbh Innis Tìle: *across the dark, rough landscape of Iceland*; chuireadh nam chuimhne: *I was reminded*; nuair a chuala mi cànan a b' aithne dhomh: *when I heard a language I recognised*; measgachadh de Thìlis is Beurla: *a mixture of Icelandic and English*; nach math sin: *isn't that good*; chuir mi iongnadh orra: *I surprised them*; bha mi toilichte an coinneachadh: *I was pleased to meet them*; thachair gun do choinnich sinn riutha a-rithist: *we happened to meet them again*; cairteal na h-uarach: *quarter of an hour*; far an robh iad an latha roimhe: *where they were the previous day*; chan eil buileach: *not entirely*; roghnaich sinn a dhol ann: *we decided to go there*; tha e nàdarrach a bhith ag iarraidh falbh a-mach gu eileanan: *it's natural to want to go out to islands*; air an làrna-mhàireach 's e sin a rinn sinn: *[on] the next day, that's what we did*; a thachair mi ris an dàrna taibhs Gàidhealach: *that I met with the second Gaelic ghost*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** beò ann an dualchas nan daoine fhathast gu ìre air choreigin: *still alive in the people's heritage to some degree or other*. You will notice that words like [air] choreigin, rudeigin (something) and badeigin (some place) break the spelling rule of “leathann ri leathann is caol ri caol”. The reason for that is that – eigin is a suffix so the word is really composed of two elements. However, because we emphasise the first syllable in speech, we write it as one (unhyphenated) word. If we were to write choiregin, ruideigin and baideigin to fit the spelling rule, we would not represent correctly the qualities of the “r”, “d” and “d” at the end of the first element in each case. It's a finely tuned system!

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Bhioraich mi mo chluasan: *I pricked up my ears/listened attentively*.

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