

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

## le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

### An t-Iasg Òir (1)

*Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gaidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 10.00 pm on a Sunday night, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'Beag air Bheag'. It is repeated at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 806. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which goes to air around 7.00 pm on Monday evenings (six days prior to Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh). Litir Bheag 502 corresponds to Litir 806. The Litir is available on the BBC website at [bbc.co.uk/litir](http://bbc.co.uk/litir).*

Bha uaireigin iasgair ann. Bha e a' fuireach cuide ri a bhean ann an taigh-tughaidh **an cois na mara**. Bha iad gu math bochd. Bha an t-uisge a' faighinn a-steach tro mhullach an taighe, bha na h-uinneagan air an sgàineadh agus bha an cuid aodaich luideagach. Ach, a dh'aindeoin sin, bha iad sona gu leòr.

Latha a bha seo, chaidh am bodach chun na carraig le lìon. Bha a bhean ag iarraidh air iasg a ghlacadh airson an suipeir. Cha d' fhuair e ach aon iasg beag. Ach 's e iasg neònach a bh' ann. Bha dath an òir air. Bha a lannan mar gum biodh air an dèanamh de dh'òr.

Thug am bodach sùil gheur air an iasg. Agus thachair rud iongantach. Dh'fhosgail an t-iasg a bheul agus thòisich e air bruidhinn. Agus bha e a' bruidhinn Gàidhlig. Uill, bha seo air taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd – 's beag an t-iongnadh gur e Gàidhlig a bh' aige, 's dòcha!

'A dhuine chòir,' thuirt an t-iasg, 'na marbh mi.' Cha robh fios aig an iasgair gu dè chanadh e. 'S iomadh bliadhna a bha e a' fuireach an cois na mara, agus 's iomadh latha a bha e ag iasgach. Ach iasg a bhruidhneadh ris – ann an cainnt a thuigeadh e – uill, cha do thachair sin riamh roimhe. 'S iomadh annas a ch'inn, agus sinn beò fada gu leòr.

'A dhuine chòir,' thuirt an t-iasg a-rithist. 'Na marbh mi. Tilg mi air ais don mhuir. Ma nì thu sin, cha bhi thu gun duais.'

'Dè an duais?' dh'fhaighnich an t-iasgair. 'Dè gheibh mi bhua?'

'Gheibh,' ars an t-iasg, 'rud sam bith a thogras mi a thoirt dhut – ach a-mhàin an cumhachd a th' agam fhìn.'

Rinn an t-iasgair gàire. 'S e còmhradh neònach a bh' ann gun teagamh, agus e a' bruidhinn ri iasg beag òir. 'Hut,' thuirt e, 'chan fhiach thu mòran air an truinnsear – tha thu ro bheag. Ach chan eil mi a' creidsinn gu bheil cumhachd mar sin agad.' Leis a sin, thilg e an t-iasg air ais don mhuir, agus dh'fhalbh e dhachaigh.

'An d' fhuair thu iasg?' thuirt a bhean ris nuair a thill e.

'Fhuair,' fhreagair an t-iasgair.

'Agus càite a bheil e?' ars a bhean.

'Ach uill,' thuirt an t-iasgair, 'bha e ro bheag. Agus leis an fhirinn innse, cha robh mi airson ithe co-dhiù.

'Carson sin?' dh'fhaighnich a bhean. 'Dè bha ceàrr air?'

‘Uill, ’s e iasg òir a bh’ ann,’ thuirt an duine aice. ‘Bha coltas air gun robh e air a dhèanamh de dh’òr.’

‘De dh’òr?’ thuirt i, ‘de dh’òr? Chan urrainn sin a bhith.’

‘Chan e sin a-mhàin,’ lean an duine aice, ‘ach bha e a’ bruidhinn rium – ann an Gàidhlig!’

Chòimhead a bhean air mar gun robh e air a dhol às a rian. Ach chùm an t-iasgair a’ dol. ‘Thuirt e rium, nan cuirinn air ais don mhuir e, gun toireadh e duais dhomh – duais sam bith a dh’iarrainn.’

‘Agus dè dh’iarr thu air?’

‘Cha do dh’iarr dad. Cha robh ann ach iasg beag.’

‘Uill,’ thuirt a bhean, ‘chan eil sin math gu leòr. Chan eil grèim bìdh anns an taigh. Thalla thus’ air ais don chladach agus iarr air an iasg aran a thoirt dhuinn.’

Thill an t-iasgair don chladach. Agus innsidh mi dhuibh dè thachair an-ath-sheachdain.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** bochd: *poor*; neònach: *strange*; tilg: *throw*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** cuide ri a bhean ann an taigh-tughaidh: *with his wife in a thatched house*; bha na h-uinneagan air an sgàineadh: *the windows were cracked*; bha an cuid aodaich luideagach: *their clothes were ragged*; a dh’aindeoin sin, bha iad sona gu leòr: *despite that, they were happy enough*; chaidh am bodach chun na carraig le lion: *the old man went to the [fishing] rock with a net*; bha a lannan mar gum biodh air an dèanamh de dh’òr: *its scales appeared to be made of gold*; ’s beag an t-iongnadh gur e Gàidhlig a bh’ aige: *it’s hardly surprising that it spoke Gaelic*; a dhuine chòir: *good man*; iasg a bhruidhneadh ris – ann an cainnt a thuigeadh e: *a fish that would speak to him – in speech he understood*; ’s iomadh annas a chì sinn, agus sinn beò fada gu leòr: *it’s many a strange thing we see if we were alive long enough*; ma nì thu sin, cha bhì thu gun duais: *if you do that, you won’t be without reward*; chan fhiach thu mòran air an truinnsear: *you’re not worth much as food [on the plate]*; chan eil mi a’ creidsinn gu bheil cumhachd mar sin agad: *I don’t believe you have power like that*; leis an fhìrinn innse, cha robh mi airson ithe co-dhiù: *to tell the truth, I didn’t want to eat it anyway*; chan urrainn sin a bhith: *that’s impossible*; chan e sin a-mhàin: *not only that*; chòimhead a bhean air mar gun robh e air a dhol às a rian: *his wife looked at him as if he had gone doolally*; nan cuirinn air ais don mhuir e: *if I would return him to the sea*; duais sam bith a dh’iarrainn: *any reward I would like*; chan eil grèim bìdh anns an taigh: *there’s not a bite of food in the house*; iarr air an iasg aran a thoirt dhuinn: *ask the fish to give us bread*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** **iasg òir:** **golden fish** (we use the same phrase for a goldfish – the type kept in domestic fish tanks). There is an adjective òrail ‘golden’ but we tend to use the genitive form of the noun òr ‘gold’ (ie òir, with a slenderised ‘r’) as the adjective (we use airgid similarly for ‘silver’). Note however that the ‘golden eagle’ is *iolair bhuidhe* not *iolair òir*.

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** **an cois na mara:** *beside the sea*.

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