

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

## le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

### Mac Gille Mhaoil na Cruit (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.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 867. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 563 corresponds to Litir 867.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh seann stòiridh à Gearrloch – ‘Mac Gille Mhaoil na Cruit’. Bha e a’ fuireach cuide ri Dòmhnallach ann an Inbhir Àsdail. Thug Mac Gille Mhaoil cuireadh don Dòmhnallach thighinn taobh Locha Dring airson sealladh fhaighinn air an Fhèinn.

Feasgar na h-ath-oidhch, chaidh iad a-mach còmhla, a’ saodachadh nan each chun a’ mhonaidh. Dh’fhàg iad na h-eich ann an àite ris an canar Achadh na Fèithe Dìrich. Agus lean iad fhèin orra cho fada ris an Fhèith Mhòir. Air dhaibh suidhe, thuirt Mac Gille Mhaoil ris an Dòmhnallach, ‘Nise, tha eagal orm gu bheil thu cho lag nad inntinn ’s nach seas thu ri ’m faicinn.’ Fhreagair an Dòmhnallach **gur e a sheasadh**.

Thuirt Mac Gille Mhaoil, ‘Leig sìos do cheann agus ceanglaidh mi e.’ Agus cheangail e a cheann le bann gu teann, tèarainte. An uair sin, thug e a-mach feadag agus leig e sgàl. B’ e sin an sgàl! Shaoil an Dòmhnallach gun deach a cheann na mhìrean!

Dh’fheòraich Mac Gille Mhaoil am b’ urrainn dha a cheann a thogail. Thuirt e gum b’ urrainn. Le sin, leig e sgàl eile. Mar an ceudna, tèile gus an robh ceann an Dòmhnallaich cha mhòr spealgte. Dh’iarr Mac Gille Mhaoil air a cheann a thogail.

Thog an Dòmhnallach a cheann agus ’s ann aigesan a bha an sealladh! Sìos an leathad a bha fa chomhair, chunnaic e daoine a’ tighinn fo làn armachd. Bha coin aca. Nuair a bha iad faisg air, thòisich e air fannachadh. Chaill e a mhothachadh agus thàinig cadal trom air. Bha an sealladh cho mòr ’s nach robh e na chomas a bhith ga ghiùlan.

Nuair a dhùisg e às a shuain, cha robh duine aige ach Mac Gille Mhaoil. Bha e na aonar os cionn an Dòmhnallaich. Bha e a’ gal agus a’ dòrtadh uisge air aodann an fhir eile.

‘A dhuine bhoichd,’ thuirt Mac Gille Mhaoil, ‘is tu a chaill air nach b’ urrainn thu seasamh ri labhairt ris na fir ud! Siod agad na gaisgich nach till air comharradh corraige dhutsa no dhòmhsa.’

Dh’èirich an dithis agus chaidh iad dhachaigh. Bha Mac Gille Mhaoil na Cruit troimhe-chèile. ‘A dhuine bhoichd,’ thuirt e a-rithist ’s a-rithist. ‘A dhuine bhoichd nach b’ urrainn seasamh ri còmhradh a chumail ris na fir ud. Bha thu air buadhan ann an còmhradh agus sealg a thogail bhuapa. B’ fheàrrde tu fhèin is do shliochd sin.’

Taobh a-staigh beagan làithean, chaochail Mac Gille Mhaoil. Mus d’ fhuair e bàs, **chaidh e anns a’ mheud mhòir**. Bha a cheann a’ ruigheachd aon cheann dhen t-sabhal

(far am biodh e a' dol a laighe), agus a chasan an ceann eile. Mar sin, bha e do-dhèante a thoirt a-mach as an t-sabhal slàn. B' fheudar a ghearradh na cheathramhan airson a thoirt a-mach agus a thiodhlacadh.

Nuair a chuala Uachdaran Gheàrrloch mun chùis, thuirt e nam biodh fios aigesan gun do chaochail e, gun rachadh barrachd cosgais a dhèanamh mu thimcheall a thiodhlacaidh. Agus thug e ainm ùr dha – Biolair Uasal mac Fhinn.

A rèir aithris, bha Mac Gille Mhaoil na Cruit air a thiodhlacadh ri taobh cnocan air fearann an t-seann taigh-sgoile ann an Inbhir Àsdail. Agus 's e Tobhtag Mhic Gille Mhaoil a chanadh daoine ris a' chnocan bho sin a-mach.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** fa chomhair: *in front of him*; coin: *dogs*; na aonar: *alone*; a' gal: *weeping*; Uachdaran Gheàrrloch: *the Laird of Gairloch*; Biolair Uasal mac Fhinn: *Noble Watercress, son of Fionn*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Mac Gille Mhaoil na Cruit: *MacMillan the Harpist*; a' saodachadh nan each: *driving the horses*; air dhaibh suidhe: *after they had sat down*; gu bheil thu cho lag nad inntinn: *that you're so weak in your mind*; 's nach seas thu ri 'm faicinn: *that you won't [be able to] withstand seeing them*; cheangail e a cheann le bann gu teann, tèarainte: *he tied his head tightly and securely with a bandage*; thug e a-mach feadag agus leig e sgàl: *he took out a whistle and gave a blast*; gun deach a cheann na mhìrean: *that his head had been blasted to smithereens*; mar an ceudna, tèile: *as before, another one*; gus an robh ceann an Dòmhnallaich cha mhòr spealgte: *until MacDonald's head was nearly shattered*; thòisich e air fannachadh: *he began to grow faint*; chaill e a mhothachadh agus thàinig cadal trom air: *he lost consciousness and fell into a deep sleep*; cho mòr 's nach robh e na chomas a bhith ga ghiùlan: *so tremendous that he was not able to endure it*; nuair a dhùisg e às a shuain: *when he awoke from his sleep*; is tu a chaill air nach b' urrainn thu [Ross-shire usage – rather than dhut] seasamh ri labhairt ris na fir ud: *you've lost out because you could not endure speaking with those men*; nach till air comharradh corraige dhutsa no dhòmhsa: *will not return at the beckoning of your finger or mine ['do', rather than 'aig' is often used for possession in Ross-shire Gaelic]*; b' fheàrrde tu fhèin is do shliochd sin: *you and your descendants would be the better of that*; b' fheudar a ghearradh na cheathramhan: *he had to be cut into quarters*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Fhreagair an Dòmhnallach **gur e a sheasadh**: *MacDonald replied that he would withstand [seeing the Fingalian warriors]. This structure emphasizes the point. I might have said, 'Fhreagair X gun seasadh e' and it would have made sense but would not have been as emphatic. Here's another example. To the question 'An tèid thu còmhla rinn?', instead of saying 'Thèid', I might say, 'Is mi a thèid!' or 'S e mi fhìn a thèid!' Absolutely I'll go – try and stop me!*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Mus d' fhuair e bàs, **chaidh e anns a' mheud mhòir**: *before he died, he grew to a gigantic size. This is the idiom used by the storyteller.*

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