

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair (1)

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 892. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 588 corresponds to Litir 892.

Nuair a bha mi ag obair ann an Geàrrloch an-uiridh, chuala mi sgeulachd mhath. Tha i co-cheangailte ri uamh faisg air Loch Ma-ruibhe ann an àite car iomallach. Chaidh a clàradh grunn tursan, uaireannan fon ainm 'Mac an Rìgh', oir 's e *Uamh Mac an Rìgh* – no *Toll an Rìgh* – a chanas daoine ris an uaimh. Ach chuala mi i le tiotal eadar-dhealaichte oirre – 'Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair'. Tha an sgeulachd mu dheidhinn gille, nighean agus gobhar – agus iomadach rud eile.

Thuirt mi ris an duine a dh'inns an stòiridh dhomh gum bu mhath leam an uamh fhaicinn dhomh fhìn. As t-Earrach am-bliadhna thug e ann mi. Mura b' e gun robh e fhèin is fear eile gam stiùireadh, cha chreid mi gun robh mi air an uamh a lorg. Tha i am measg chreagan mòra a bhris às a' bhearradh os a cionn, le craobhan a' fàs asta. Agus feumar sreap gu leac airson faighinn a-steach innte. Ach, na broinn, tha i tioram agus gheibhear fasnachadh bho aimsir sam bith. Àite math airson mac rìgh a bhith am falach!

Bu mhath leam an sgeulachd aithris dhuibh – no geàrr-chunntas dhith co-dhiù. Bha fear òg agus a mhàthair a' fuireach anns an sgìre sin – ann an Àird Làir, air taobh an ear Loch Ma-ruibhe. Tha ceangal pearsanta agam don àite sin oir bha an duine aig piuthar mo sheanmhar na gheamair ann o chionn fhada. Bha iad a' fuireach ann beagan bhliadhnaichean agus chòrd an t-àite ri m' Antaidh Dolaidh, mar a bh' agam oirre.

Co-dhiù, air ais don sgeulachd. Bha fear òg agus a mhàthair a' fuireach ann. B' iad na h-ainmean orra Coinneach agus Oighrig. Bha iad bochd. Bha iad beò air na gheibheadh iad le sealg is iasgach. Ach bha gobhair aca, agus bha tè dhiubh cianail math air bainne a thoirt dhaibh. 'S e Earba an t-ainm a bh' oirre agus bha i cho torrach ri bò.

Ach thachair gun do sguir i uiread sin de bhainne a thoirt dhaibh. Bhiodh Oighrig ga bleoghan gach latha ach cha toireadh Earba mòran bainne seachad. Bha fios aig Oighrig gun robh rudeigin ceàrr. Latha a bha seo, nuair a thill Coinneach às a' mhonadh, thuirt i, 'Tha amharas agam **gum bi na sìthichean ga bleoghan**. No gu bheil laogh fèidh gun mhàthair ga deoghal. Gach latha, bidh i a' falbh à fianais am measg nan creag thall an sin, agus i a' mèilich.'

'Cuireamaid air teadhair i,' thuirt Coinneach.

'O, cha chuir,' ars a mhàthair. 'Bhiodh sin a' briseadh a cridhe. Lean thusa oirre, feuch faighinn a-mach **cà'l i a' dol**.'

An ath latha, chaidh Coinneach am falach am measg nan creag. Bha Earba gu math seòlta agus chaill an gille sealladh oirre. Ach an latha an dèidh sin, rinn e an rud ceudna agus chunnaic e an gobhar a' dol a-steach a bhriseadh anns na creagan. Chaidh Coinneach gu beul na h-uamha ach thàinig Earba a-mach agus chuir i stad air bho bhith a' dol a-steach. Bha coltas fiadhaich oirre. Bha i a' dìon rudeigin a bha am broinn na h-uamha.

Chaidh an gille dhachaigh. Cho-dhùin e fhèin 's a mhàthair tilleadh an ath mhadainn airson sùil a thoirt am broinn na h-uamha. Leanaidh an sgeulachd an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: Geàrrloch: *Gairloch*; an-uiridh: *last year*; geàrr-chunntas: *summary*; Àird Làir: *Ardlair*; Oighrig: *Euphemia, Effie*; Earba: [*literally*] '*Roe Deer*'; ga bleoghan: *milking her*; sìthichean: *fairies*; a' mèilich: *bleating*.

Abairtean na Litreach: uamh faisg air Loch Ma-ruibhe ann an àite car iomallach: *a cave near Loch Maree in a fairly remote place*; chaidh a clàradh grunn tursan: *it has been [was] recorded several times*; gum bu mhath leam an uamh fhaicinn dhomh fhìn: *that I would like to see the cave for myself*; as t-Earrach am-bliadhna thug e ann mi: *in the spring of this year he took me there*; mura b' e gun robh e gam stiùireadh: *if it hadn't been for the fact that he was guiding me*; cha chreid mi gun robh mi air an uamh a lorg: *I don't reckon I'd have found the cave*; a bhris às a' bhearradh os a cionn: *that broke from the cliff-face above it*; feumar sreap gu leac: *one must climb to a ledge*; gheibhear fasgadh bho aimsir sam bith: *shelter is obtained from any weather*; bha an duine aig piuthar mo sheanmhar na gheamair ann: *the husband of my grandmother's sister was a gamekeeper there*; bha i cho torrach ri bò: *shed was as productive as a cow*; thachair gun do sguir i uiread sin de bhainne a thoirt dhaibh: *it came about that she stopped giving them so much milk*; gu bheil laogh fèidh gun mhàthair ga deoghal: *that a motherless red deer calf is sucking her*; cuireamaid air teadhair i: *let's put her on a tether*; chaill an gille sealladh oirre: *the lad lost sight of her*; rinn e an rud ceudna: *he did the same again*; a' dìon rudeigin: *protecting something*; airson sùil a thoirt am broinn na h-uamha: *to take a look inside the cave*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Tha amharas agam **gum bi na sìthichean ga bleoghan:** *I suspect that the fairies are milking her. When milk dried up, the sìthichean were often blamed – either they were milking the animal themselves or they had put a spell on it. Because the animal is feminine [and always will be with the verb bleoghan!], we don't lenite the verbal noun (it is feminine singular). Thus bha mi ga bleoghan 'I was milking her'; but bha na banaraich gam bleoghan 'the milkmaids were milking them'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Lean thusa oirre, feuch faighinn a-mach cà' l i a' dol: *you follow her to try to find out where she is going.*

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