

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair (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.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 893. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 589 corresponds to Litir 893.

Bha mi ag aithris na seann sgeulachd 'Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair' à taobh Loch Ma-ruibhe. Chaidh Coinneach agus Oighrig gu beul na h-uamha. Nochd an gobhar, Earba. Bha i a' dìon na h-uamha, ach chuir Coinneach ròp timcheall air a h-adharcan. Bha Earba a' mèilich aig àird a cinn nuair a bhris gille òg a-mach às an uaimh, ag èigheachd, 'Màm, Màm!'

'A Dhè ghràs-mhoir, glèidh mi!' thuirt Coinneach. 'S e sìthiche a th' ann!' Dh'iarr e air a mhàthair teicheadh.

'Chan e no sìthiche,' thuirt guth às an uaimh. 'Tha uiread de dh'fhuil a' sruthadh ann 's a tha a' sruthadh annad fhèin.' B' ann le boireannach òg brèagha a bha an guth. Leum i a-mach às an uaimh, ag ràdh, 'S ann leamsa a tha an gille.'

'Dè fon ghrèin a tha sibh a' dèanamh an seo?' dh'fhaighnich Oighrig. Mhìnich am boireannach dhi gun robh i fhèin agus an gille air a bhith ann an cunnart am beatha far an robh iad. Theich iad agus lorg iad an uamh. Ach **bha biadh a dhìth orra** agus, mura b' e an gobhar, bha iad air bàs fhaighinn. Thug Oighrig dhachaigh iad.

'Dè an t-ainm a th' ort?' dh'fhaighnich Oighrig.

'Fionnghal,' fhreagair an tè òg.

'Agus an gille?'

'Eòghann a th' air,' thuirt i.

'Agus a chinneadh?' dh'fhaighnich Oighrig.

Cha robh an tè òg deònach sin innse. Chan innseadh i **a chinneadh no a shloinneadh**.

'Uill, ma-thà,' thuirt Oighrig, 'canaidh sinn "Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair" ris. Agus 's e sin an t-ainm a bh' air chun an latha a chaochail e.

Dh'fhuirich a' cheathrar còmhla ann an taigh Oighrig. Bha Coinneach air leth math mar shealgair agus bha biadh gu leòr aca. Mean air mhean bha e a' tuiteam ann an gaol le Fionnghal. 'A mhàthair,' thuirt e latha a bha seo, 'a bheil sibh a' smaoinneachadh gur i Fionnghal màthair Eòghainn?'

'Chan i,' fhreagair Oighrig. 'Chanainn gur e òigh a th' innte.'

'Bu mhath leam a pòsadh ma-thà,' arsa Coinneach.

'Ist thu, 'ille,' fhreagair i, 'tha thu a cheart cho buailteach a bhith a' faighinn banrigh nan nèamhan mar bhean 's a tha thu a bhith a' pòsadh Fionnghal.'

'Banrigh nan nèamhan?'

'A' ghealach,' mhìnich a mhàthair. 'S e nighean rìgh a th' ann am Fionnghal. Sheall i dhomh trusgan sgàrlaid agus claidheamh a bha le athair a' ghille. Tha i gan

cumail airson dearbhadh latha brèagha air choreigin gur e uaislean a th' annta. Dh'fhaodadh tu fhèin a bhith nad sgalaig dhi, ach cha phòs i thu a-chaidh.' Chuir na faclan sin Coinneach fo bhròn.

Thàinig an t-uachdaran, Morair Caisteal Dhonnain, a shealg anns an nàbachd – mar a bhitheadh bho àm gu àm. Bha an t-eagal air Fionnghal. Bha i airson tilleadh don uaimh. Ach bha e ro anmoch. Bha a' bhuidheann-seilg taobh a-muigh an taighe.

An ceann mionaid no dhà, nochd am morair fhèin taobh a-muigh taigh Oighrig. Thàinig Coinneach a-mach ann an cabhaig, a' dùnadh an dorais às a dhèidh le brag. 'Nis', a Choinnich,' thuir an t-uachdaran, 'Dè tha thu am falach am broinn an taighe, eh? Carson nach tug thu copan bainne dhomh mar a bhitheas mar as trice?' Mus d' fhuair Coinneach cothrom dad a ràdh, leum am morair far eich agus chaidh e a-steach don taigh. Agus innsidh mi tuilleadh anns an ath Litir.

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Faclan na Litreach: Loch Ma-ruibhe: *Loch Maree*; ag èigheachd: *shouting*; sìthiche: *fairy*; a' ghealach: *the moon*; a' bhuidheann-seilg: *the hunting party*.

Abairtean na Litreach: beul na h-uamha: *the mouth of the cave*; ròp timcheall air a h-adharcan: *a rope around her horns*; a' mèilich aig àird a cinn: *bleating at the top of her voice [head]*; a Dhè ghràs-mhoir, glèidh mi: *God of grace, preserve me*; dh'iarr e air a mhàthair teicheadh: *he asked his mother to flee*; guth às an uaimh: *a voice from the cave*; tha uiread de dh'fhuil a' sruthadh ann 's a tha a' sruthadh annad fhèin: *there is as much blood streaming in him as is streaming in you*; 's ann leamsa a tha an gille: *the lad belongs to me*; mura b' e an gobhar, bha iad air bàs fhaighinn: *if it hadn't been for the goat, they would have died*; cha robh an tè òg deònach sin innse: *the young woman wasn't willing to tell that*; air leth math mar shealgair: *excellent as a hunter*; mean air mhean bha e a' tuiteam ann an gaol: *bit by bit he was falling in love*; a bheil sibh a' smaoinichadh gur i Fionnghal màthair Eòghainn?: *do you think that Flora is Ewen's mother?*; chanainn gur e òigh a th' innte: *I'd say she is a virgin*; bu mhath leam a pòsadh ma-thà: *I'd like to marry her then*; ist thu, 'ille: *be quiet, lad*; tha thu a cheart cho buailteach a bhith a' faighinn banrigh nan nèamhan mar bhean 's a tha thu a bhith a' pòsadh Fionnghal: *you are as likely to get the queen of the heavens as a wife as you are to marry Flora*; trusgan sgàrlaid agus claidheamh: *scarlet apparel and a sword*; a bhith nad sgalaig dhi: *to be her servant*; cha phòs i thu a-chaidh: *you'll never marry her*; dè tha thu am falach am broinn an taighe?: *what are you hiding within the house?*; leum am morair far eich: *the lord jumped off his horse*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Chan innseadh i a chinneadh no a shloinneadh: *she wouldn't tell his clan name or his patronymic. Sometimes both cinneadh and sloinneadh are used as translations for the English 'surname', but properly speaking the first refers to the clan somebody belongs to and the second names him in relation to his father, grandfather and previous generations (or through the mother's line if she is a local person and the father an incomer).*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: bha biadh a dh'ith orra: *they were in need of food.*

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