

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Nant Gwrtheyrn (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.maclea@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 913. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 609 corresponds to Litir 913.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Nant Gwrtheyrn – an t-àite sa Chuimrigh far a bheil ionad-cànain. Nuair a thàinig an triùir mhanach ann, rinn iad trì mallachdan. Nam measg bha seo – ‘cha phòs na fir à Nant Gwrtheyrn boireannaich à Nant Gwrtheyrn’.

Air sgàth sin, bhiodh na fir a’ falbh a-mach à Nant Gwrtheyrn airson mnathan a lorg. Thàinig e nach robh ach trì bailtean-fearainn air fhàgail ann – Tŷ Hen (an seann taigh), Tŷ Canol (an taigh meadhanach) agus Tŷ Uchaf (an taigh àrd).

Aig Tŷ Uchaf bha fear Rhys Maredydd a’ fuireach cuide ri a phiuthar, Angharad. ’S e dilleachdan a bh’ annta. Bha co-ogha aca – tè Meinir – a bha a’ fuireach ann an Tŷ Hen. Ghabh Rhys agus Meinir gràdh air a chèile.

Bhiodh iad a’ suidhe còmhla aig bonn craobh-dharaich mhòr. Dh’iarr Rhys air Meinir a phòsadh agus dh’aontaich i. Ach, nuair a chaidh Rhys a’ bruidhinn ri a h-athair, cha do dh’aontaich esan idir.

‘Chan fhaod thu Meinir a phòsadh,’ thuirt e. ‘Cuimhnich a’ mhallachd. Chan fhaod fear à Nant Gwrtheyrn boireannach às an àite seo a phòsadh.’ Ge-tà, bha Meinir cho muldach ’s gun do dh’atharraich a h-athair a bheachd. Air sgàth na mallachd, rinn iad co-dhùnadh gum biodh a’ bhanais ann an Eglwys Clynnog Fawr (**eaglais na cuileannaich mhòir**) pìos air falbh.

Thàinig madainn na bainnse. ’S e latha math samhraidh a bh’ ann agus choisich Rhys a-null gu baile-fearainn Meinir. Bha traidisean ann gum biodh bean na bainnse a’ dol am falach, agus **gum biodh aig fear na bainnse ri a lorg**. Mar sin, cha robh sgeul air Meinir. Bha i air teicheadh.

Chaidh Rhys ga lorg anns an t-sabhal agus anns a’ bhàthaich, ach cha robh sgeul air Meinir. Chaidh e bho phàirc gu pàirc ach cha robh sgeul oirre. Bha an aimsir a’ fàs teth agus bha Rhys a’ fàs sgìth dhen ghèam. ‘’S dòcha gu bheil i air a dhol don eaglais ann an Clynnog Fawr,’ thuirt cuideigin.

Choisich Rhys a-null gu Clynnog Fawr ach cha robh Meinir an sin. Thill e gu Nant Gwrtheyrn. Choisich na daoine thar a’ mhonaidh, agus thàinig dorchadas na h-oidhche. Ach cha do lorg iad Meinir. Chaidh na làithean, na seachdainean, na mìosan seachad, agus chan fhacas Meinir. Chaochail a h-athair agus bha Rhys troimhe-chèile. Gach feasgar, bhiodh e na shuidhe fon chraoibh-dharaich. Bhiodh e ag èigheachd, ‘A Mheinir, a Mheinir, càit a bheil thu?’

Chaidh trithead bliadhna seachad. Cha do phòs Rhys tè eile. Cha robh duine air fhàgail ann an Nant Gwrtheyrn ach e fhèin. Oidhche a bha seo, bha e na shuidhe fon chraoibh-dharaich nuair a bha dealanaich mhòr ann. Bhuail beithir dealanaich a’

chraobh, ga sgàineadh ann an dà phìos. Agus dè chunnaic Rhys am broinn na craoibhe ach cnàimhneach le pìos de dhreasa bainnse air. Bha Meinir air a bhith am falach anns a' chraoibh agus bha i air tuiteam a-steach gu toll innte. Agus cha d' fhuair i a-mach a-chaidh.

Chaidh corp Rhys a lorg, agus grèim aige air cnàimhneach Meinir. Air sgàth na mallachd, bha Nant Gwrtheyrn a-rithist gun sluagh.

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Faclan na Litreach: ionad-cànain: *language centre*; mallachdan: *curses*; bailtean-fearainn: *farms*; co-ogha: *cousin*; cuimhnich: *remember*; sabhal: *barn*; bàthaich: *byre*; chaochail: *died*; troimhe-chèile: *bereft*.

Abairtean na Litreach: triùir mhanach: *three monks*; cha phòs na fir à X boireannaich à X: *the men from X won't marry women from X*; a' fuireach cuide ri a phiuthar: *living with his sister*; aig bonn craobh-dharaich mhòr: *at the base of a large oak tree*; cha do dh'aontaich esan idir: *he didn't agree at all*; cho muladach 's gun do dh'atharraich a h-athair a bheachd: *so distraught that her father changed his mind*; airson na bainnse: *for the wedding*; gum biodh bean na bainnse a' dol am falach: *that the bride would go into hiding*; cha robh sgeul air Meinir: *Meinir wasn't to be found*; thar a' mhonaidh: *across the hill*; chan fhacas X: *X wasn't seen*; bhiodh e na shuidhe fon chraoibh-dharaich: *he would sit below the oak tree*; cha do phòs Rhys tèile: *Rhys didn't marry another woman (tè eile)*; bhuail beithir dealanaich a' chraobh, ga sgàineadh ann an dà phìos: *a bolt of lightning hit the tree, splitting it into two pieces*; dè chunnaic Rhys am broinn na craoibhe ach cnàimhneach le pìos de dhreasa bainnse air: *what did Rhys see inside the tree but a skeleton with a bit of wedding dress on it*; air a bhith am falach anns a' chraoibh: *had been hiding in the tree*; bha i air tuiteam a-steach gu toll innte: *she had fallen into a hole in it*; cha d' fhuair i a-mach a-chaidh: *she never got out*; agus grèim aige air cnàimhneach X: *holding onto X's skeleton*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach Eglwys Clynnog Fawr (**eaglais na cuileannaich mhòir**): *the relationship between Welsh and Gaelic is fascinating, even to us non-scholars because we so often see echoes of one in the other. Eglwys has its cognate in eaglais; clynnog (or more commonly celynnog) is equivalent to cuileannach, meaning 'a place where the cuileann or holly tree grows, a holly grove' and fawr is cognate with mhòr, both being soft mutations, or lenited forms, of mawr and mòr 'big'. The English 'church of the big holly grove' in contrast looks nothing like the Celtic forms.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: gum biodh aig fear na bainnse ri a lorg: *that the bridegroom would have to find her.*

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