

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

MacCodruim nan Ròn (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 1,160. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 856 corresponds to Litir 1,160.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an sgeulachd *MacCodruim nan Ròn*. Phòs Niall MacCodruim a’ mhaighdeann-ròin. Bha dithis chloinne aca còmhla – balach agus nighean – Dòmhnall agus Mòrag. Bha falt donn aca mar a bh’ aig an athair, ach bha sùilean dubha aca coltach rim màthair. Coltach ri ròn, gu dearbh. Eadar an òrdagan-coise bha pìosan craicinn. Bha an casan car coltach ri spògan-lacha.

Gach latha a bha Niall a-muigh san eathar ag iasgach, bhiodh a’ chlann air a’ chladach, a’ buain bhàirneach agus a’ cruinneachadh cairgein. Bhiodh am màthair còmhla riutha. Bha an coltas oirre mar gun robh i toilichte gu leòr.

Ge-tà, nuair a thigeadh gaoth an iar le uisge, bhiodh coltas eile oirre. Bhiodh i a’ snìomh le cuibhle-shnìomh agus a’ gabhail òrain tiamhaidh. Bhiodh i a’ luasgadh bho thaobh gu taobh mar a bhiodh pìos fiodha anns an fhairge. Cha bhiodh Niall ag iasgach air làithean mar sin. Bhiodh e na shuidhe anns an oisean, ag èisteachd ri a bhean, agus e ann an droch shunnd. Cha chanadh e guth ri duine.

Chaidh trì bliadhn’ deug seachad. Latha samhraidh a bha seo, bha a’ **bhean** air a’ mhachair, a’ cladhach freumhaichean a’ bhrisgein a bha i a’ dol a ròstadh. Chuala i a nighean Mòrag. ‘Seall, a màthair,’ thuirt Mòrag, ‘nach annasach an rud mòr breac a lorg mi ann an seann chiste-eòrna. Tha e cho mìn ri sìoda!’ Bha i air seann bhian a mhàthar a lorg. Bha Niall air a chur am falach anns a’ chiste.

Dh’èirich a màthair gu a casan. Cha tuirt i guth ach shuath i a bian le a làimh. Ghabh i grèim air a’ bhian agus chuir i a gàirdean timcheall a h-ìghne, agus choisich iad air ais don taigh. Nuair a bha i a-staigh, dh’èigh i air a mac, Dòmhnall.

Thàinig Dòmhnall agus mhìnich am boireannach don dithis aca dè bha a’ dol a thachairt. ‘Bidh mi gur fàgail,’ thuirt i. ‘Tha gaol mòr agam oirbh, ach feumaidh mi tilleadh gu mar a bha mi.’

Air an oidhche sin, dh’èirich am boireannach bhon leabaidh far an robh a cèile na chadal. Chaidh i don chladach agus thug i a h-aodach dhith. Thug i a-mach a bian agus chuir i **uimpe** e. Chaidh i a-steach don mhuir agus airson greis bha i leatha fhèin faisg air a’ chladach, agus a ceann os cionn na mara.

An uair sin, thàinig sia ròin eile. Chaidh iad ceithir-thimcheall oirre agus thuig i gun robh a muinntir fhèin ga h-aithneachadh is a’ cur fàilte oirre.

Nuair a dhùisg Niall MacCodruim, cha robh sgeul air a bhean anns an leabaidh. Chaidh e a-mach agus cha robh sgeul oirre anns a’ bhàthaich no anns an t-sabhal. Thug e sùil anns a’ chiste-eòrna. Cha robh am bian-ròin ann. Thuig e an uair

sin gun robh a bhean air tilleadh don mhuir agus nach tigeadh i thuige a-chaidh tuilleadh.

Ach bha e eadar-dhealaichte don chloinn aca. Air oidhcheannan nuair a bha fàs a' tighinn air a' ghealaich agus an tìde-mhara a' lìonadh, bhiodh Dòmhnall is Mòrag a' falbh don chladach casrùisgte. Bhiodh iad a' feitheamh ann gus an tigeadh ròn breac aig an robh sùilean mòra. Bhiodh a' chlann ag èigheachd airson am màthar agus a' snàmh còmhla rithe le mòr-ghàirdeachas gu briseadh an latha.

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Faclan na Litreach: maighdeann-ròin: *selkie, seal-woman*; òrdagan-coise: *toes*; spògan-lacha: *webbed feet*; casrùisgte: *barefooted*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha falt donn aca mar a bh' aig an athair: *they had brown hair like their father's*; bha sùilean dubha aca coltach rim màthair: *they had dark eyes like their mother*; a-muigh san eathar ag iasgach: *out in the boat fishing*; a' buain bhàirneach agus a' cruinneachadh cairgein: *harvesting limpets and gathering carragheen*; nuair a thigeadh gaoth an iar le uisge, bhiodh coltas eile oirre: *when the west wind came with rain, her appearance would change*; a' snìomh le cuibhle-shnìomh agus a' gabhail òrain tiamhaidh: *spinning with a spinning-wheel and singing sad songs*; a' luasgadh bho thaobh gu taobh mar a bhiodh pìos fiodha anns an fhairge: *swinging from side to side like a piece of wood in the open sea*; na shuidhe anns an oisean: *sitting in the corner*; cha chanadh e guth ri duine: *he wouldn't say anything to anybody*; a' cladhach freumhaichean a' bhrisgein a bha i a' dol a ròstadh: *digging up silverweed roots that she was going to roast*; nach annasach an rud mòr breac a lorg mi ann an seann chiste-eòrna: *the big speckled thing I found in an old barley-kist is unusual*; bha Niall air a chur am falach: *Neil had hidden it*; shuath i a bian le a làimh: *she rubbed her skin with her hand*; chuir i a gàirdean timcheall a h-ìghne: *she put her arm around her daughter*; far an robh a cèile na chadal: *where her spouse was sleeping*; chaidh iad ceithir-thimcheall oirre: *they surrounded her*; gun robh a muinntir fhèin ga h-aithneachadh: *that her people were recognising her*; nach tigeadh i thuige a-chaidh tuilleadh: *that she would never return to him again*; a' snàmh còmhla rithe le mòr-ghàirdeachas gu briseadh an latha: *swimming along with her with delight until daybreak*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Thug i a-mach a bian agus chuir i **uimpe** e: *she took out her skin and she put it around her*. Uimpe is a prepositional pronoun connected to the preposition *mu* 'around' and it means 'around her'. The other forms for this prepositional pronoun are *umam* 'around me', *umad* 'around you', *uime* 'around him', *umainn* 'around us', *umaibh* 'around you' and *ùmpa* 'around them'. Today, for clothing, we tend to use the preposition *air* 'on' – bidh thu a' cur aodach ort. But in olden times clothes like the fèileadh and shawls etc tended to be worn around the body. Bhiodh tu a' cur aodach umad.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: bha a' bhean air a' mhachair: *the wife/woman was on the machair*. The word *bean* can mean both 'woman' and 'wife'.

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