

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Ceatharnach Shiaboist (2)

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,210. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 906 corresponds to Litir 1,210. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Tha mi ag aithris an sgeòil 'Ceatharnach Shiaboist'. Nuair a chaidh a' bhò dhubh aig Ruairidh Dearg a dhìth, chuir Alasdair Moireasdan agus a cho-ogha, Ùisdean MacAmhlaigh, romhpa dhol a choimhead anns a' bhothan aig a' cheatharnach air mullach na Beinne Mòire. Cha robh iad a' creidsinn gum biodh duine sam bith làidir gu leòr airson bò a tharraing suas gu mullach na beinne. Ach chaidh iad ann le armachd, deiseil airson sabaid.

Air cliathaich na beinne, lorg iad fianais gun robh a' bhò dhubh air a marbhadh an sin, agus air a tarraing suas am bruthach. Shaoil iad nach biodh iad glic a dhol suas. Bhiodh fios aig a' cheatharnach gun robh iad ann. Gu dearbh, bha. Bha e a' coimhead orra bho gu h-àrd. Thuig e gun robh fios aig an dithis fhear gum b' esan am mèirleach. Ach cha robh fios aige gun robh an dithis eile eòlach air a bhothan air mullach na beinne.

Tha an sgeulaiche, Tormod an t-Seòladair, ag innse dhuinn beagan mun cheatharnach. Bha e mòr, mu chòig air fhichead bliadhna a dh'aois, agus bha e sgeadaichte ann an trusgan Gàidhealach. Bha fhèileadh air a dhèanamh de bhreacan Cloinn 'ic Leòid. Bha falt dubh air agus bha e eireachdail.

Mu sheachdain an dèidh call na bà, bha an ceatharnach na shuidhe anns a' bhothan aige air an oidhche. Thàinig fitheach mòr don bhothan. Mar as trice, nuair a thig fitheach gu dachaigh duine, tha e a' comharrachadh cunnart no eadhon bàs. Ach cha do chuir e dragh air a' cheatharnach. Dh'èirich e, thog e a chladheamh, dh'fhalbh e a-mach agus chaidh e sìos le cliathaich na beinne.

Nuair a dh'èirich a' ghrian, bha an duine ri taobh Loch Athabhat Mòr, ann an àite còmhnard, mìle gu leth bhon bhothan aige. Bhiodh na banaraich a' tighinn a-mach bho na bailtean. Bha iad a' dol a bhleoghainn nam bò. Chitheadh iad e.

Mar sin, **chuir e roimhe** a dhol am falach gus an tigeadh dorchadas na h-oidhche. Faisg air ceann a deas an locha, lorg e bac àrd le fraoch fada a' fàs air a mhullach. Chaidh e am falach fon fhraoch. Bha e na laighe an sin, agus gu math cofhurtail. **Cha b' fhada gus an robh e na chadal.**

Mu mheadhan-latha, thàinig dithis bhoireannach òga gu taobh siar an locha. 'S e latha brèagha samhraidh a bh' ann. Bha na boireannaich mu naoi bliadhna deug a dh'aois. B' i tè dhiubh Iseabail Mhoireasdan, an nighean a bu shine aig ceann-cinnidh nam Moireasdanach. Còmhla rithe bha a co-ogha, Peigi Mhoireasdan.

Ràinig iad cladach ceann a deas an locha, far an robh an talamh bog, le bac àrd, agus fraoch a' fàs air a' mhullach. Faisg air sin, bha an duilleag-bhàite bhàn a' fàs. 'Seall, a Pheigi,' thuirt Iseabail. 'Tha mi a' dol a spìonadh cuid de na flùraichean brèagha seo.'

'Thoir an aire,' arsa Peigi. 'Tha an t-uisge domhainn agus tha grunn an locha bog. Ma thuiteas tu a-steach, bidh thu air do bhàthadh.'

'Na gabh eagal,' fhreagair Iseabail. 'Bidh mi faiceallach. Cha tuit mi a-steach.' Aig a' mhionaid sin, thàinig dealan-dè mòr. Stad e air an duilleig-bhàite a b' fhaigse air a' chladach. Agus chì sinn dè thachair an uair sin anns an ath Litir.

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Faclan na Litreach: Ceatharnach Shiaboist: *The Shawbost Freebooter*; a cho-ogha: *his cousin*; eireachdail: *handsome*; fitheach: *raven*; còmhnard: *flat*; banaraich: *milkmaids*; chitheadh iad: *they would see*; spìonadh: *picking, plucking*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Tha mi airson ur toirt gu taobh siar Leòdhais: *I want to take you to the west of Lewis*; gum biodh duine sam bith làidir gu leòr airson bò a tharraing suas gu mullach na beinne: *that any man would be strong enough to drag a cow up to the top of mountain*; le armachd, deiseil airson sabaid: *with weapons, ready to fight*; bha e a' coimhead orra bho gu h-àrd: *he was watching them from on high*; gum b' esan am mèirleach: *that he was the robber*; sgeadaichte ann an trusgan Gàidhealach: *wearing Highland garb*; bha fhèileadh air a dhèanamh de bhreacan Cloinn 'ic Leòid: *his kilt and plaid were made of MacLeod tartan*; call na bà: *the loss of the cow*; tha e a' comharrachadh cunnart no eadhon bàs: *it marks danger or even death*; chaidh e sìos le cliathaich na beinne: *he descended the mountainside*; a' dol a bhleoghainn nam bò: *going to milk the cows*; lorg e bac àrd le fraoch fada a' fàs: *he found a high bank with long heather growing*; am falach fon fhraoch: *hiding under the heather*; dithis bhoireannach òga: *two young women*; Iseabail Mhoireasdan, an nighean a bu shine aig ceann-cinnidh nam Moireasdanach: *Ishbel Morrison, the eldest daughter of the clan chief of the Morrisons*; còmhla rithe bha a co-ogha, Peigi Mhoireasdan: *along with her was her cousin, Peggy Morrison*; bha an duilleag-bhàite bhàn a' fàs: *the white-flowered water lily was growing*; seall, a Pheigi: *look, Peggy*; thoir an aire: *take care*; tha grunn an locha bog: *the bottom of the loch is soft*; bidh thu air do bhàthadh: *you'll be drowned*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Mar sin, **chuir e roimhe** a dhol am falach: *thus, he decided to hide*. This use of the verb *cuir* and the preposition *ro* is a very useful one to say that somebody has decided or resolved to do something. You have to use the appropriate form of the prepositional pronoun e.g. *chuir mi romham* 'I decided'; an do chuir thu romhad? 'did you decide?'; chuir sinn romhainn 'we decided'. In the text of the Litir we have *chuir Alasdair Moireasdan agus a cho-ogha, Ùisdean MacAmhlaigh, romhpa.. 'AM and his cousin ÙM decided'*...

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **Cha b' fhada gus an robh e na chadal:** *it wasn't long until he was asleep*.

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