

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Ceatharnach Shiaboist (4)

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 1,212. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 908 corresponds to Litir 1,212. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Chuala 'Ceatharnach Shiaboist' claidheamh Alasdair Mhoireasdain a' bualadh ann an creag mar rabhadh dha. Theich e agus, ged a lorg na daoine a bhothan, cha robh e ann. Nuair a fhuair na daoine sealladh air, bha e mìle air thoiseach orra, aig bonn na beinne, a' ruith a dh'ionnsaigh na mara.

Mu dheireadh, ghlac na daoine e air tràigh siar air Siabost. Nuair nach robh duine eile san èisteachd, dh'inns Alasdair dha gun robh a theaghlach taingeil dha airson beatha a pheathar a shàbhaladh. Ràinig iad taigh Ruairidh Dheirg air a' Chàrnan Mhòr. Bha Iseabail Mhoireasdan an sin, cuide ri a h-athair.

Chunnaic i am fear a shàbhail i. 'O, athair,' thuirt i, '**siud am fear a shàbhail mi** anns an loch. Chan fhaod sibh a chrochadh.' Bha i ann an gaol leis.

'Nì mi mo dhleastanas, Iseabail,' fhreagair a h-athair. 'Bidh e a rèir co-dhiù tha am fear òg ciontach no neoichiontach.' Fhad 's a bha e a' bruidhinn, bha feadhainn bhon bhaile a' rannsachadh a' bhothain air mullach na Beinne Mòire. An sin, lorg iad fianais gu leòr gum b' esan am mèirleach.

Mar sin, cha b' urrainn do dh'athair Iseabail, ris an canadh iad 'Am Britheamh' càil a dhèanamh airson am fear òg a shàbhaladh. Chaidh fhaighinn ciontach. B' e a' bhinn crochadh gu bàs. Thogadh croich air cnoc ris an canar Cnoc a' Chrochaidh, agus chaidh an duine a chur gu bàs an sin. Bha an sagart ga fhrithealadh agus ghiùlain an ceatharnach e fhèin le uaisleachd.

Cha d' fhuair na daoine a-mach cò bh' anns a' cheatharnach no eadhon an t-ainm a bh' air, ach gum buineadh e do na Leòdaich. Chaidh a thiodhlacadh ann an glac ghorm aig bonn a' chnuic far an deach a chrochadh. Sgrìobh an sgeulaiche, Tormod an t-Seòladair, gun gabhadh a' ghlac aithneachadh fhathast o chionn ceud bliadhna.

Chan e sin buileach deireadh an sgeòil, ge-tà. Taobh a-staigh seachdain on a fhuair an duine bàs, dh'fhàs Iseabail Mhoireasdan tinn. Cha tàinig feabhas oirre, agus taobh a-staigh sia mìosan bha i marbh.

An latha mus do chaochail i, chuir i fios air a bràthair, Alasdair. Nuair a thàinig Alasdair a-steach don t-seòmar aice, dh'iarr i air a màthair, a bha cuideachd an làthair, an seòmar fhàgail. Nuair a bha an dithis còmhla – piuthar agus bràthair – dh'inns Iseabail dha nach maireadh i beò fada. '**Mar as dual**, bidh mi air mo thiodhlacadh ann an Cladh Bhràgair,' thuirt i, 'anns an oisean a bhuineas don teaghlach againn. Ach air an dàrna oidhche an dèidh an tiodhlacaidh, tha mi ag iarraidh ort fhèin agus air

Ùisdean MacAmhlaigh a dhol ann air an oidhche. Tha mi airson 's gun tog sibh mo chiste às an uaigh agus gun ath-thiodhlaic sibh i anns an uaigh aig an fhear threun a shàbhail mo bheatha. Ach feumaidh sibh seo a chumail dìomhair bho ar pàrantan.'

Agus 's e sin a thachair. Chaidh Iseabail agus an duine gun ainm a shàbhail i a shìneadh còmhla anns an aon uaigh. Goirid an dèidh sin, chuir cuideigin craobh – seileach-caoidheach – air an uaigh.

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Faclan na Litreach: theich e: *he fled*; Cnoc a' Chrochaidh: *the hill of the hanging*; tinn: *ill*; dìomhair: *secret*; seileach-caoidheach: *weeping willow*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Chuala 'Ceatharnach Shiaboist' claidheamh Alasdair Mhoireasdain a' bualadh ann an creag mar rabhadh dha: *the Shawbost Freebooter heard Alasdair Morrison's sword hitting a rock as a warning to him*; mìle air thoiseach orra, aig bonn na beinne: *a mile ahead of them, at the base of the hill*; a' ruith a dh'ionnsaigh na mara: *running towards the sea*; taingeil dha airson beatha a pheathar a shàbhaladh: *grateful to him for saving his sister's life*; chan fhaod sibh a chrochadh: *you can't hang him*; nì mi mo dhleastanas: *I'll do my duty*; a rèir co-dhiù tha am fear òg ciontach no neoichiontach: *according to whether [or not] the young man is guilty or not guilty*; fianais gu leòr gum b' esan am mèirleach: *plenty of evidence that he was the thief*; b' e a' bhinn crochadh gu bàs: *the judgement was death by hanging*; bha an sagart ga fhrithealadh: *the priest was attending him*; ghiùlain an ceatharnach e fhèin le uaisleachd: *the freebooter carried himself with dignity*; gum buineadh e do na Leòdaich: *that he belonged to the MacLeods*; chaidh a thiodhlacadh ann an glac ghorm: *he was buried in a green hollow*; bonn a' chnuic far an deach a chrochadh: *the bottom of the hill where he was hanged*; gun gabhadh a' ghlac aithneachadh fhathast: *that the hollow could still be recognised*; cha tàinig feabhas oirre: *she didn't improve*; an latha mus do chaochail i, chuir i fios air a bràthair: *the day before she died, she sent for her brother*; nach maireadh i beò fada: *that she wouldn't live long*; gun tog sibh mo chiste às an uaigh: *that you'll lift my coffin from the grave*; gun ath-thiodhlaic sibh i: *that you'll rebury it*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: siud am fear a shàbhail mi: *that's the man who saved me*. Why have I used siud here, rather than sin? It's all to do with distance from the speaker. If the man were next to her, Ishbel would have said 'seo am fear ...'. If he had been a short distance from her, she would have said 'sin am fear ...'. However, he was at a considerable distance from her, so she said 'siud am fear ...'. I might have translated it 'yonder is the man ...'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Mar as dual: *as is customary*.

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