

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Sealladh Gàidhealach air a' Mharaig

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 1,215. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 911 corresponds to Litir 1,215. 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 cinnteach gu bheil sibh eòlach air an fhacal *marag* – biadh car coltach ri taigeis anns a bheil, gu tric, feòil agus/no anablach – *a savoury pudding often containing meat and/or offal*. Gu tric, bidh *marag dubh*, oir tha i air a dèanamh de dh'fhuil a bhios a' dol dubh an dèidh a bhith air a goil. 'S e sin *marag-dhubh*.

Bidh *marag-dhubh* mar as trice ann an cumadh isbein. Ach, anns an t-seann aimsir, bha e air a dèanamh ann an caolan. Gu tric, bhiodh ceann caol agus ceann reamhar aice. Tillidh sinn gu sin ann am mionaid no dhà.

Tha diofar sheòrsaichean maraige ann agus tha gu leòr dhiubh anns nach eil fuil. Mar eisimpleir, tha *marag-gheal* 'white pudding' ann agus *marag-choirce* 'oatmeal pudding'. Agus *marag-truisg*. Tha sin a' ciallachadh 'cod pudding'. Bhathar a' dèanamh *marag-truisg* ann an stamag an èisg. Bhiodh iad a' cur measgachadh ann de ghrùthan an truisg, min-choirce agus spìosraidhean.

Bha *marag-geòidh* ann cuideachd. 'S e sin 'goose pudding'. Marag-geòidh. Bha i air a dèanamh ann an stamag a' gheòidh. Bhiodh daoine a' cur fuil agus geir bhon ghèadh ann, agus spìosraidhean a bharrachd.

Bha maragan cho cudromach ann am beatha nan Gàidheal 's gum bi iad a' nochdadh gu tric ann an abairtean is seanfhaclan. Tha mi airson feadhainn aithris dhuibh.

Cha truagh leam cù, is marag mu amhaich. A bheil sibh a' tuigsinn sin? I don't pity a dog that has a marag around its neck. Seadh, chan eil truas agam ri duine a tha beartach, eadhon ged a bhiodh e a' gearan. Bu chòir dha a bhith sàsaichte leis na th' aige. Cha truagh leam cù, is marag mu amhaich.

Agus seo agaibh seanfhacal eile co-cheangailte ri cù agus marag mu amhaich. **B' e sin marag earbsa ris a' chù dhubh.** *That was [like] trusting the black dog with a marag.* Am biodh sibhse a' cur earbsa ann an cù dhan tug thu marag airson, can, giùlan gu àite eile?! Tha teans ann gun cùmhadh e a' mharag dhà fhèin agus gum biodh e ga h-ithe. B' e sin marag earbsa ris a' chù dhubh.

Mar a bha mi ag ràdh, bhiodh ceann reamhar agus ceann caol aig marag. Ma fhuair cuideigin **barrachd na bhiodh dùil de rudeigin**, bidh sinn ag ràdh gun d' fhuair e ceann reamhar na maraige. Ma fhuair e na bu lugha na bhiodh dùil, bidh sinn ag ràdh gun d' fhuair e ceann caol na maraige.

Agus tha an seanfhacal ann – *am fear a bhios a' roinn na maraige, bidh an ceann reamhar aige fhèin. The man who divides up the marag, he will have the thick end to himself.* Am fear a bhios a' roinn na maraige, bidh an ceann reamhar aige fhèin Saoil a bheil sin an-còmhnaidh ceart? Am bi daoine an-còmhnadh fèineil anns an dòigh sin? Cha chreid mi gum bi.

Nise, tha mi cinnteach gum bi sibh eòlach air an t-seanfhacal Bheurla '*the proof of the pudding is in its eating*'. Tha e math gu leòr a bhith a' moladh rudeigin. Ach 's ann le fheuchainn a gheibh thu a-mach cho math 's a tha e. Tha seanfhacal Gàidhlig againn car coltach ri sin. 'S e moladh na maraige ga feuchainn. *The praise of the marag is tasting it.* 'S e moladh na maraige ga feuchainn.

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Faclan na Litreach: anablach: *offal*; caolan: *intestine(s)*; a' roinn: *dividing*; an-còmhnaidh: *always*.

Abairtean na Litreach: tha i air a dèanamh de dh'fhuil: *it's made of blood*; an dèidh a bhith air a goil: *after being boiled*; ann an cumadh isbein: *in the shape of a sausage*; bhiodh ceann caol agus ceann reamhar aice: *it would have a narrow end and a broad end*; tha diofar sheòrsaichean maraige ann: *there are different types of marag*; bhathar a' dèanamh marag-truisg ann an stamag an èisg: *cod marag was being made in the fish's stomach*; bhiodh iad a' cur measgachadh ann de ghrùthan an truisg, min-choirce agus spìosraidhean: *they would put in a mixture of the cod's liver, oatmeal and seasonings*; fuil agus geir bhon ghèadh: *blood and fat from the goose*; tha mi airson feadhainn aithris dhuibh: *I want to tell you some of them*; cha truagh leam cù: *I don't pity a dog*; am biodh sibhse a' cur earbsa ann an cù dhan tug thu marag: *would you trust a dog to which you gave a marag*; airson, can, giùlan gu àite eile: *to, say, take it to another place*; gun d' fhuair e ceann reamhar na maraige: *that he got the broad end of the marag*; am bi daoine an-còmhnadh fèineil anns an dòigh sin?: *are people always selfish in that way?*; cha chreid mi gum bi: *I don't think so*; tha e math gu leòr a bhith a' moladh rudeigin: *it's good enough to be praising something*; 's ann le fheuchainn a gheibh thu a-mach cho math 's a tha e: *it's by trying it that you will find out how good it is*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: barrachd na bhiodh dùil de rudeigin: *more than might be expected of something. This idiom is a pronounless reduction of what might be expected in an active rather than passive clause viz. 'barrachd na bhiodh tu an dùil de rudeigin'. It has a passive meaning [it doesn't name the actor] but it doesn't use a strictly passive verb [which would be 'barrachd na bhite an dùil'].* You might also be familiar with mar a bhiodh dùil '*as would/might be expected*'. An d' fhuair thu an t-airgead? Fhuair, ach na bu lugha na bha dùil. '*Did you get the money? Yes, but less than was expected*'.

Seanfhacal na Litreach: B' e sin marag earbsa ris a' chù dhubh: *that was [like] trusting the black dog with a marag.*

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