

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Ùisdean Mòr agus a' Ghobhar Bhuidhe

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 1,217. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 913 corresponds to Litir 1,217. 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 airson sgeulachd innse dhuibh à sgìre Gheàrrloch ann an Ros an Iar. 'S e an t-ainm a th' oirre 'Ùisdean Mòr agus a' Ghobhar Mhòr Bhuidhe'.

Bha fear ann uaireigin a' fuireach ann an Diabaig air an robh Ùisdean Mòr mar ainm. No Ùisdean Mòr Mac Gille Phàdraig airson ainm slàn a thoirt dha. 'S e duine treun a bh' ann. Cha robh càil ann a chuireadh eagal air, agus bha e deònach aghaidh a thoirt air olc sam bith.

Bha frith-rathad eadar Diabaig agus Geàrrloch. Bha e a' dol thairis air monadh. Bhathar a' gabhail 'An Tom Buidhe' air. Tha glac ann air a bheil Slocag an Tuim Bhuidhe, agus bha cunnart an sin. Dè an cunnart a bh' ann? Gobhar mhòr fhiadhaich a bha a' fuireach ann. Bhiodh a' ghobhar bhuidhe a' dol ann an iomadh riochd. Bhiodh i a' toirt ionnsaigh mharbhtach air luchd-siubhail. Bha e fìor chunnartach a dhol ann an dèidh dol-fodha na grèine. Ach b' e sin an dùbhlán do dh'Ùisdean Mòr!

Latha a bha seo, dh'fhàg Ùisdean Geàrrloch aig ciaradh an fheasgair agus rinn e air an t-slighe a Dhiabaig. Thàinig e gu taigh. Fhuair e fàilte is furan bhon fhear a bha a' fuireach ann, a bha na bhreabadair.

'Càit a bheil thu a' dol?' dh'fhaighnich am breabadair.

'Tha mi a' dol,' ars Ùisdean, 'a dh'ionnsaigh an Tuim Bhuidhe.'

'Ist,' thuirt am breabadair, 'nach eil eagal ort ron Ghobhair Bhuidhe?'

'Chan eil,' fhreagair Ùisdean. 'Tha claidheamh agam.'

'Dè mura tig an claidheamh às an truail?'

arsa fear an taighe.

'Mura tig,' fhreagair Ùisdean, 'feuchaidh mi an gunna oirre.'

'Ge-tà,' thuirt am breabadair. 'Dè thachras mura loisg an gunna?'

'Mura loisg,' ars Ùisdean, 'feuchaidh mi Catriona, piuthar mo sheanmhar'.

Thàinig an còmhradh gu ceann. Chùm Ùisdean a dol air a shlighe. Ràinig e Slocag an Tuim Bhuidhe agus chuala e meigeadaich na goibhre. Leum a' ghobhar ga ionnsaigh. Chuir Ùisdean a làmh air a chloidheamh agus tharraing e air. Ach, mo chreach, cha tigeadh e às a thruail. Cha mhòr nach robh a' Ghobhar Bhuidhe air. Thog Ùisdean a ghunna. Loisg e e, ach cha tàinig sradag às!

'Ùisdein Mhòir Mhic Ghille Phàdraig,' ars a' ghobhar, a' dèanamh lachan-gàire, 'càit a bheil do chloidheamh 's do ghunna?' Rug a' bhèist air Ùisdean agus chuir i gu a ghlùinean e. 'Agus càit a bheil Catriona, piuthar do sheanmhar?'

‘Tapadh leat,’ ars Ùisdean, ‘airson a cur nam chuimhne’. B’ e ‘Catriona’ ainm a bhiodaig a bha am falach na chuid aodaich. Tharraing e i, agus shàth e a-steach i a bhrù na goibhre. Chaidh a’ ghobhar à fianais sa bhad.

Dh’fhalbh Ùisdean air ais gu taigh a’ bhreabadair. Cha robh am breabadair san leabaidh ged a bha e anmoch air an oidhche. Bha e na laighe fon bheairt aige, a’ sileadh na fala.

‘Seall dhomh na lotan agad,’ thuirt Ùisdean. Chunnaic e lot ann am brù a’ bhreabadair. Dh’aithnich e gum b’ e am breabadair a’ ghobhar olc ann an riochd eile.

‘Mas tu a rinn uiread de chall air an Tom Bhuidhe,’ thuirt Ùisdean, ‘**cha tèid thu òirleach nas fhaide.**’ Thug Ùisdean sàthadh bàis don bhreabadair le e bhiodaig. Dh’fhalbh Ùisdean Mòr Mac Gille Phàdraig air ais dhachaigh. Agus cha deach aon duine a mharbhadh le gobhar no fuath air an Tom Bhuidhe bhon uair sin.

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Faclan na Litreach: gobhar: *goat*; frith-rathad: *moorland road*; Slocag an Tuim Bhuidhe: *the small hollow of the Tom Buidhe ‘yellow knoll’*; lachan-gàire: *guffaw*; sàthadh bàis: *death-thrust*; le e bhiodaig: *with his dirk*; fuath: *spectre*.

Abairtean na Litreach: à sgìre Gheàrrloch ann an Ros an Iar: *from the Gairloch area in Wester Ross*; airson ainm slàn a thoirt dha: *to give him his full name*; cha robh càil ann a chuireadh eagal air: *there was nothing that would frighten him*; bha e deònach aghaidh a thoirt air olc sam bith: *he was willing to face up to any evil*; bhiodh X a’ dol ann an iomadh riochd: *X would appear in many forms*; dol-fodha na grèine: *the setting of the sun*; ciaradh an fheasgair: *dusk*; fhuair e fàilte is furan bhon fhear a bha a’ fuireach ann, a bha na bhreabadair: *he received a welcome from the man who was living there, who was a weaver*; dè mura tig an claidheamh às an truaill?: *what if the sword doesn’t come out of the scabbard?*; feuchaidh mi an gunna oirre: *I’ll try the gun on it (the goat)*; dè thachras mura loisg an gunna?: *what happens if the gun doesn’t fire?*; feuchaidh mi Catriona, piuthar mo sheanmhar: *I’ll try Catriona, my grandmother’s sister*; chuala e meigeadaich na goibhre: *he heard the goat’s bleating*; cha tigeadh e às a thruaill: *it wouldn’t come out of its scabbard*; cha mhòr nach robh X air: *X was almost upon him*; loisg e e, ach cha tàinig sradag às: *he fired it but no spark came from it*; rug a’ bhèist air Ùisdean agus chuir i gu a ghlùinean e: *the beast grabbed Hugh and put him on his knees*; tapadh leat airson a cur nam chuimhne: *thank you for reminding me of her*; na laighe fon bheairt aige, a’ sileadh na fala: *lying under his loom, bleeding*; seall dhomh na lotan agad: *show me your wounds*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Ùisdein Mhòir Mhic Ghille Phàdraig: *this is an example of a complex sloinneadh (name based on ancestry) in the vocative case when he is being addressed. Ùisdean Mòr becomes Ùisdein Mhòir, with the broad vowels being slenderised (as in Ùisdein Mhòir Mhic Ghille Phàdraig he vocative ‘a bhalaich!’). Mac Gille Phàdraig becomes Mhic Ghille Phàdraig. Somebody speaking to their son might say ‘a mhic!’ when addressing him (although this would not be a common form of address).*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: cha tèid thu òirleach nas fhaide: *you won’t go another inch.*

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