

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Dà naidheachd à Raineach

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 1,218. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 914 corresponds to Litir 1,218. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Bha mi o chionn ghreis ann an Coille Dhubh Raineach, no 'Coille Dhubh Raineach' mar a chanadh na seann Ghàidheil a bhuineadh don àite. 'S i tè de na seann choilltean Cailleannach a bha uaireigin pailt air a' Ghàidhealtachd. Bha i uaireigin na h-àite-falaich aig eucoirich agus fineachan a bha nan nàimhdean don riaghaltas.

Tha dualchas na Gàidhlig làidir ann an Raineach. Bhiodh naidheachdan beaga aca dhen t-seòrsa a chluinntean ann an taigh-chèilidh. Bu mhath leam dà naidheachd à Raineach innse dhuibh an-diugh.

Tha a' Choille Dhubh air cladach a deas Loch Raineach, agus tha an naidheachd seo à Loch Raineach fhèin. Bha duin'-uasal à Lunnainn a bhiodh a' tighinn a Loch Raineach airson iasgach. **Tha mi a' dèanamh dheth** gum biodh e a' tighinn a h-uile bliadhna.

Turas a bha seo, chaill e fàinne bho a chorraig. Bha e ag iasgach ann am bàta, agus thuit an fhàinne bho a chorraig don uisge. Cha b' e fàinne àbhaisteach a bh' innte. Bha suaicheantas a theaghlaich oirre. Bhiodh e furasta gu leòr don duine leis an robh i a h-aithneachadh. Ach bha i air a dhol gu aigeann an locha. Cha robh dùil no dòchas gum faigheadh an duine sealladh oirre a-rithist.

Ge-tà, thill an duine seo a Raineach an ath bhliadhna. Bha e a' siubhal ann an **carbad-iarainn**. Bha fear mu a choinneamh agus mhothaich am fear à Lunnainn gun robh fàinne air a chorraig. 'Gabhaibh mo leisgeul,' thuir e, 'ach càit an d' fhuair sibh an fhàinne sin? Sin an fhàinne agamsa. Tha suaicheantas mo theaghlaich oirre.'

'Uill,' thuir am fear eile, 'innsidh mi dhuibh mar a thachair. Bha mi iasgach ann an Loch Raineach agus ghlac mi breac. Chaidh an t-iasg a thoirt don chòcaire anns an taigh-òsta agus chaidh a bhruch dhomh. Ach thàinig an còcaire chun a' bhùird agus chuir e fàinne air mo bheulaibh. Dh'inns e dhomh gun do lorg e an fhàinne ann an stamag an èisg.' Nach iongantach an sgeul agus thathar ag ràdh gu bheil e fìor.

Tha an naidheachd eile mòran nas sine, agus cluinnear a leithid ann am pàirtean eile dhen Ghàidhealtachd cuideachd. Ann am Bliadhna Theàrlaich, bha saighdearan-dearga siar air Loch Raineach. Chunnaic iad saighdear Gàidhealach air mullach Meall Comraidh. Bha e ri mì-mhodh is fanaid orra.

Chuir iad dithis shaighdearan-dearga suas airson dèiligeadh ris. Dh'fhalbh iad thar a' mhullaich agus à fianais. Chualas fuaim de chath agus cha do thill na saighdearan-dearga. Chaidh a h-uile càil sàmhach.

Goirid an dèidh sin, thill an saighdear Gàidhealach gu mullach na beinne. Thòisich e a-rithist air fanaid. An turas seo, chaidh feachd a chur suas airson dèiligeadh ris. Dh'fhalbh iad à fianais air cùl mullach na beinne. A-rithist bha fuaim de shabaid ann, air a leantainn le sàmhchair. Agus nochd an saighdear Gàidhealach a-rithist air a' mhullach.

An turas seo, dh'òrdaich an coirneal ionnsaigh mhòr a thoirt air an t-saighdear Ghàidhealach. Dh'fhalbh a h-uile saighdear-dearg còmhla. Nuair a bha iad faisg air a' mhullach, nochd fear de na saighdearan aca fhèin. Cha robh e marbh, ach bha e air a leòn. 'Thallaibh air ais!' dh'èigh e mar rabhadh. 'S e feall a th' ann! Tha dithis ann!'

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Faclan na Litreach: Coille Dhubh Raineach: *The Black Wood of Rannoch*; Cailleannach: *Caledonian*; aigeann: *bottom, great depth*; mu a choinneamh: *opposite him*; breac: *trout*; Bliadhna Theàrlaich: *1745-6*.

Abairtean na Litreach: mar a chanadh X a bhuineadh don àite: *as X who belonged to the place would say*; bha i uaireigin na h-àite-falaich aig eucoirich agus fineachan a bha nan nàimhdean don riaghaltas: *it was at one time a hiding place for criminals and clans who were enemies of the government*; bhiodh naidheachdan beaga aca dhen t-seòrsa a chluinntean anns an taigh-chèilidh: *they would have (tell) anecdotes of the sort that would be heard in the ceilidh house*; bho a chorraig: *from his finger*; cha b' e fàinne àbhaisteach a bh' innte: *it wasn't a normal ring*; bha suaicheantas a theaghlaich oirre: *his family's crest was on it*; bhiodh e furasta gu leòr don duine leis an robh i a h-aithneachadh: *it would be easy enough for the man who owned it to recognise it*; cha robh dùil no dòchas gum faigheadh an duine sealladh oirre a-rithist: *there was no expectation or hope that the man would see it again*; thill an duine seo a Raineach an ath bhliadhna: *this man returned to Rannoch the following year*; innsidh mi dhuibh mar a thachair: *I'll tell you what happened*; thàinig an còcaire chun a' bhùird: *the chef came to the table*; bha e ri mì-mhodh is fanaid orra: *he was being rude and derisory towards them*; airson dèiligeadh ris: *to deal with him*; thar a' mhullaich agus à fianais: *over the summit and out of sight*; chualas fuaim de chath: *sound of battle was heard*; bha e air a leòn: *he was wounded*; 's e feall a th' ann: *it's a trap*; tha dithis ann: *there are two of them*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: a' siubhal ann an carbad-iarainn: *travelling in a train*. While the loanword *trèana* is most commonly used today for 'train', older Gaels would call it a carbad-iarainn 'iron chariot', so I used that term, as the story might go back a long time. I remember an old man in Applecross years ago who would quite naturally speak of a carbad-ola, rather than using the loanword *càr*, as that was the vocabulary he had grown up with. He had been a postman and could remember when, towards the end of his career, his bicycle was replaced by a carbad-ola.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Tha mi a' dèanamh dheth gum biodh e a' tighinn a h-uile bliadhna: *I reckon he would be coming every year*.

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