

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Dòmhnall Alasdair MacCoinnich (5)

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 1,285. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 981 corresponds to Litir 1,285. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

An t-seachdain seo tha mi a' dol a thoirt mo chunntais mu Aonghas, Brìde agus a' Chailleach Bheura gu ceann. Tha e stèidhichte air an leabhar *Wonder Tales from Scottish Myth and Legend* le Dòmhnall Alasdair MacCoinnich.

Chruthaich a' Chailleach na diofar ghaothan as t-earrach, **feuch stad a chur air** teachd an t-samhraidh. Bha biadh air fàs gann. Cha robh comas aig na h-iasgairean falbh gu muir oir bha an aimsir ro gharbh. Air an oidhche, bhiodh a' Chailleach agus a searbhantan a' goid biadh bho thaighean. Bha fodar ann airson na sprèidhe ach shèid a' ghaoth air falbh e.

Ach bha cùisean a' dol an aghaidh na caillich. Shocraich an aimsir. Rinn an lach gàirdeachas. 'Ha hà!' thuirt i, 'tha mi fhathast beò. **Tha, agus mo shia iseanan.**' 'Fuirich ort!' ars a' Chailleach. 'Chan eil mi ullamh fhathast.'

Air an oidhche, ghabh a' Chailleach grèim air trì latha geamhraidh nach robh air an cur gu feum fhathast. Rinn i iasad dhiubh. Bha Aonghas mu-thràth air iasad a dhèanamh de trì latha samhraidh bhon Lùnastal a ghluais e air ais don gheamhradh. Co-dhiù, rinn a' Chailleach iasad air trì latha geamhraidh. Canaidh daoine 'Trì Latha nan Òthaisgean' no 'Trì Latha Lomaidh nan Eun' riutha.

Thàinig sneachd, clachan-meallain agus gaoth mhòr. Bha tuil anns na h-aibhnichean. Chaidh an lach agus a h-iseanan a mharbhadh. Chaill mòran daoine am beatha.

Ach bha an geamhradh a' tighinn gu ceann. Dh'fhalbh a' Chailleach gu tuath. Mus do dh'fhalbh i, thilg i a h-òrd draoidheil fo chraobh chuilinn. 'S e sin as coireach nach bi feur a' fàs fo chraobhan-cuilinn chun an latha an-diugh.

Bha a' Chailleach air muin-eich. Nuair a leum an t-each thairis air Loch Èite, thàinig e sìos gu cruaidh air leathad beinne. Dh'fhàg e comharra a chruidhean air a' chreig. Canaidh daoine 'Na Cruidhean' ris an àite sin fhathast.

Lean an t-each agus a' Chailleach orra gu tuath. Ghabh i fois air mullach Beinn na Caillich, faisg air an Ath Leathann anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Bha i a' feitheamh gus am biodh an latha cho fada ris an oidhche. Canaidh sinn 'co-fhad-thràth an earraich' ris an latha sin.

Thàinig Aonghas agus Brìde gu tìr air an latha sin. Chuir daoine fàilte orra. Anns na beanntan, bha gu leòr de na lochan fhathast reòite. Chuir Brìde a làmhan a-

steach a loch far an robh an t-uisge fuar fuar. Chaidh a' Chailleach Bheura na suain. Cha bhiodh i a' dùsgadh a-rithist gus am biodh an samhradh agus am foghar seachad.

Cho luath 's a bha Aonghas na rìgh agus Brìde na banrìgh, thòisich am feur air fàs. Chuir na daoine sìl agus dh'iarr iad air Brìde gum biodh bàrr math aca. Bha an tìr gu lèir còmhdaichte le dìtheanan brèagha.

Tha Dòmhnall Alasdair MacCoinnich ag innse dhuinn mar cho-dhùnadh nach robh mìosachan ceart aig muinntir na h-Alba. Ach bha iad a' tomhas na h-aimsir a rèir a' chunntais mun dol a-mach eadar a' Chailleach agus Aonghas is Brìde. 'S e an strì a bh' ann eatarra an strì eadar earrach is geamhradh, fàs is bàs, solas is dorchadas, agus blàths is fuachd.

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Faclan na Litreach: Dòmhnall Alasdair MacCoinnich: *Donald Alexander Mackenzie*; fodar: *fodder*; shocraich: *settled, subsided*; lach: *wild duck*; ullamh: *finished, done*; An Lùnastal: *August*; òthaisgean: *ewes*; Loch Èite: *Loch Etive*; co-fhad-thràth an earrach: *spring equinox*; reòite: *frozen*; a' dùsgadh: *waking*; dìtheanan: *flowers*; mìosachan: *calendar*; eatarra: *between them*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Chruthaich a' Chailleach na diofar ghaothan as t-earrach: *the Cailleach created the various winds in spring*; bha biadh air fàs gann: *food had become scarce*; cha robh comas aig na h-iasgairean falbh gu muir oir bha an aimsir ro gharbh: *the fishermen couldn't put to sea because the weather was too rough*; bha cùisean a' dol an aghaidh: *matters were going against*; ghabh X grèim air trì latha geamhraidh nach robh air a chur gu feum fhathast: *X took hold of three winter days that were not yet used*; rinn i iasad dhiubh: *she made borrowings of them*; Trì Latha Lomaidh nan Eun: *the three fleecing days of the birds*; bha tuil anns na h-aibhnichean: *the rivers were in flood*; chaidh an lach agus a h-iseanan a mharbhadh: *the duck and her ducklings were killed*; chaill mòran daoine am beatha: *many people lost their lives*; mus do dh'fhalbh i: *before she left*; thilg i a h-òrd draoidheil fo chraobh chuilinn: *she threw her magic hammer under a holly tree*; dh'fhàg e comharra a chruidhean air a' chreig: *it left the mark of its horseshoes on the rock*; faisg air an Ath Leathann anns an Eilean Sgitheanach: *near Broadford on Skye*; chaidh X na suain: *X went into a slumber*; bha iad a' tomhas na h-aimsir: *they were reckoning the weather*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: tha mi fhathast beò. **Tha, agus mo shia iseanan:** *I'm still alive, and so are my six ducklings. This is the structure we use as an equivalent to the English 'and so are/is'. Note the repetition of the verb. Here are some other examples.* Chunnaic Alasdair an ceann-suidhe anns a' charbad. Chunnaic, agus mise. *'Alasdair saw the president in the vehicle and so did I'*; Bha an t-eagal air Pòl. Bha, agus ormsa *'Paul was afraid and so was I'*; Gabhaidh Anna bainne is siùcar. Gabhaidh, is mise *'Ann will take milk and sugar, and so will I'*.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: feuch stad a chur air teachd an t-samhraidh: *in an attempt to stop the arrival of the summer*.

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