

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Caisteal a' Bhreabadair (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 1,306. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,002 corresponds to Litir 1,306. 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 Iain MacNèill, mac a' bhreabadair, ann an Lunnainn. Bha e am measg sheann mharaichean. Dh'inns fear dhiubh do chàch mar a mharbh e spùinneadair ainmeil agus a thriùir mhac. B' iad na spùinneadairean a bu chunnartaiche anns na h-Eileanan an Iar. Bha fios aig Iain, a bha a-nise na chaitean air soitheach-mara, gun robh am fear eile a' bruidhinn air athair agus a bhràithrean. Bha Iain air gealltainn gun dèanadh e dìoghaltas air an duine a mharbh iad ann an Èirisgeigh nuair a bha e òg.

Chaidh Iain a-null a bhruidhinn ris an duine. Thug e taing dha airson a bhith cho treun. Thug am fear eile cuireadh do dh'Iain biadh a ghabhail cuide ris aig an taigh aige an ath latha. Thuirt e le moit gun robh fuil a' bhreabadair fhathast air a chloidheamh. Cha do thuig e gum b' e Iain MacNèill am mac a b' òige aig a' bhreabadair. Bha iomadh bliadhna air a dhol seachad on uair sin.

An ath latha nochd Iain aig taigh an fhir eile. Bha biadh is deoch deiseil. Ach thuirt Iain **nach gabhadh e càil ri ithe no òl** gus am fac' e an claidheamh a chleachd am fear eile airson an spùinneadair a mharbhadh.

Thug am bodach Iain a-steach gu seòmar eile. Dh'fhosgail e preas agus thug e an claidheamh a-mach. Bha fuil a' bhreabadair fhathast air an lann. Thàinig e a-steach air Iain gum faodadh e an claidheamh a chleachdadh airson an duine a mharbhadh. Ach dh'atharraich e a bheachd. Thug e dòrn dha na chluais agus thuit am bodach marbh. B' e sin an dìoghaltas a bha mac a' bhreabadair air gealltainn.

Ach cha b' urrainn dha fuireach ann an Lunnainn tuilleadh. B' fheudar dha teicheadh. Dh'fhàg e an soitheach aige, agus a carago, ann an Lunnainn agus chaidh e am falach ann an Uibhist. Bha e air a bhith air falbh on taigh cho fada 's gun robh e an dùil nach biodh duine ga aithneachadh.

Agus bha sin fìor. Nuair a ràinig e taigh a mhàthar, bha seann bhoireannach na suidhe a-muigh. 'S e latha brèagha samhraidh a bh' ann. Bha Iain an dùil gum b' e sin a mhàthair – ged nach robh e ga h-aithneachadh gu furasta.

Cha robh ise ga aithneachadh-san idir. Nuair a thàinig e faisg air an taigh, thuirt i ris, 'An e seòladair a th' annad? An do thachair thu riamh ris a' ghille agam – Iain MacNèill?'

Chaidh Iain a-null agus thug e pòg do a mhàthair. Bha uiread de dh'iongnadh oirre 's nach robh comas labhairt aice airson greis.

Chan eil fhios agam an do mhìnich Iain do a mhàthair mar a rinn e dìoghaltas às leth athar 's a bhràithrean. Saoilidh mi gun do mhìnich oir nuair a dh'fhàg e an taigh bliadhnaichean roimhe, thuirt e gur e sin a bha fa-near dha.

A rèir an sgeòil, mar a dh'aithris an Codaidd e ann an '*Tales from Barra*', dh'fhuirich Iain ann an taigh a mhàthar ann an Uibhist airson còrr is dà bhliadhna. Nuair a bha dhen bheachd gun robh e sàbhailte dha, fhuair e obair mar mharaiche a-mach à Liverpool. Chan eil fhios agam an do ghabh e ainm ùr air fhèin, ach thathar ag ràdh gu bheil a shliochd fhathast a' fuireach anns a' phort-mhara sin.

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Faclan na Litreach: Iain MacNèill: *John MacNeil*; soitheach-mara: *maritime vessel*; treun: *brave*; cuireadh: *invitation*; preas: *cupboard*.

Abairtean na Litreach: am measg sheann mharaichean: *among old mariners*; dh'inns fear dhiubh do chàch: *one of them told the others*; mar a mharbh e spùinneadair ainmeil agus a thriùir mhac: *how he killed a famous pirate and his three sons*; b' iad na spùinneadairean a bu chunnartaiche anns na h-Eileanan an Iar: *they were the most dangerous pirates in the Western Isles*; gun robh am fear eile a' bruidhinn air athair agus a bhràithrean: *that the other man was speaking about his father and brothers*; gun dèanadh e dìoghaltas: *that he would get revenge*; thuirt e le moit gun robh fuil a' bhreabadair fhathast air a chloidheamh: *he said with pride that the weaver's blood was still on his sword*; am mac a b' òige: *the youngest son*; thug e dòrn dha na chluais agus thuit am bodach marbh: *he punched him in the ear and the old man fell dead*; b' e sin an dìoghaltas a bha mac a' bhreabadair air gealltainn: *that was the revenge that the son of the weaver had promised*; cha b' urrainn dha fuireach ann an Lunnainn tuilleadh: *he couldn't stay any longer in London*; cha robh ise ga aithneachadh-san idir: *she wasn't recognising him at all*; an do thachair thu riamh ris a' ghille agam?: *did you ever meet my son?*; bha uiread de dh'iongnadh oirre 's nach robh comas labhairt aice airson greis: *she was so surprised that she couldn't speak for a while*; thuirt e gur e sin a bha fa-near dha: *he said that that was his intention*; an do ghabh e ainm ùr air fhèin: *if he took a new name*; gu bheil a shliochd fhathast a' fuireach anns a' phort-mhara sin: *that his descendants still live in that maritime port*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Chaidh Iain a-null** a bhruidhinn ris an duine: ***John went over to speak to the man***. A-null (*dialectally a-nunn*) is an adverb that we use when expressing movement away from the speaker. It does not express a static state and should be used with a verb of motion. Dh'fhalbh i a-null a Chanada '*she went over to Canada*'. We express movement towards the speaker with a-nall e.g. thàinig iad a-nall a dh'Alba '*they came over to Scotland*'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: thuirt Iain nach gabhadh e càil ri ithe no òl: ***John said he wouldn't take anything to eat or drink***.

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