

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Calum agus Màiri (2)

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 1,317. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,013 corresponds to Litir 1,317. 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 ag innse sgeulachd mu dheidhinn gille agus nighean – bràthair is piuthar. Chaidh an gille – Calum – a chall aig muir. Bha a phiuthar – Màiri – **fo mhulad** mu dheidhinn.

Feasgar a bha seo, bha Màiri a' gabhail cuairt air an tràigh. Chaidh i gu uamh. Bha i fhèin agus Calum air cluich anns an uaimh sin gu tric. Chunnaic Màiri rud annasach. Bha lorgan-coise – no lorgan-phiuta – ann, a dh'fhàg ròn anns a' ghainmhich. Bha an ròn air tighinn a-mach às a' mhuir, a' dèanamh air na creagan air beulaibh na h-uamha. Ach an sin dh'atharraich na lorgan-phiuta gu lorgan-coise aig duine.

Bha e annasach. Agus bha na lorgan-coise eadar-dhealaichte air gach cois. Air a' chois chli bha còig òrdagan, mar a bhiodh dùil. Ach, air a' chois dheis, cha robh ann ach ceithir.

Chaidh Màiri a-steach don uaimh. Na shuidhe ann an oisean, bha a bràthair, Calum. Chuir iad an gàirdeanan timcheall a chèile. Bha Màiri cho toilichte a bràthair fhaicinn. 'Ò, a Chalum,' thuir i, 'thill thu!'

'Thill,' dh'aontaich Calum. 'Ach cha bhi mi ann fada.'

'Carson?' thuir Màiri. 'Carson nach do thill thu dhachaigh?'

'Cha robh an roghainn agam,' arsa Calum. 'Nuair a chaidh an t-eathar againn bun-os-cionn, chaidh mo thilgeil dhan uisge. Ach cha b' urrainn dhomh snàmh. Thug ròn mi gu grunn na mara. An sin, bha uamh mhòr làn de mhuinntir nan ròn. Agus buinidh mise dhaibh a-nise. Mar a bha mi a' miannachadh o chionn fhada.'

Thug Màiri sùil air làmhnan Chalum. Bha craiceann eadar a mheuran mar gur e spòg lacha a bh' aige. No pluit ròn. An uair sin, thug i sùil air a chasan. Cha robh sgeul air òrdaig-mhòir air a chois dheis.

'Ò, a Chalum,' arsa Màiri, '**dè thachair don òrdaig-mhòir agad?**'

'Hut,' fhreagair Calum, 'cha do chòrd e riut.'

'Ge-tà,' arsa Màiri, 'carson a chaill thu i?'

'Innsidh mi sin dhut,' thuir Calum. 'Nuair a rinn muinntir nan ròn cobhair orm, bha iad ag iarraidh rudeigin bhuam. Cha robh dad agam ri thoirt dhaibh ach m' òrdag-mhòr. Agus cha robh mi ga h-iarraidh, co-dhiù.'

'Obh, obh, a Chalum,' arsa Màiri. 'Bha mi dìreach a' tarraing asad mun òrdaig-mhòir. Cha robh mi ga iarraidh gun cailleadh thu i.'

‘Cha robh e goirt nuair a chaill mi i,’ fhreagair Calum. ‘Agus chan eil mi ga h-ionndrainn.’

‘Thig dhachaigh, a Chaluim,’ thuir a phiuthar. ‘Tha Mam is Dad air a bhith troimhe-chèile.’

‘Cha tig,’ ars a bràthair. ‘Agus tha mi ag iarraidh nach inns thu dhaibh gum faca tu mi.’ Dh’aontaich Màiri nach canadh i guth ri a pàrantan. Dh’inns Calum dhi gum faodadh i fhèin tighinn a chèilidh air anns an uaimh uair sam bith.

Nuair a thill Màiri dhachaigh, chunnaic a pàrantan gun robh i eadar-dhealaichte. Bha i cho sona ris an rìgh. Bha i toilichte cabadaich leotha. Ged nach robh sgeul air Calum, thug Màiri toileachas dhaibh.

Cha robh fios aig duine gum biodh Màiri a’ coinneachadh gu tric ri a bràthair anns an uaimh. Ach bha i a’ sgrìobhadh mu dheidhinn ann an leabhar beag dearg – mar a chluinneas sinn nuair a chuireas mi crìoch air an stòiridh an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: uamh: *cave*; lorgan-phiuta: *flipper tracks*; thill: *returned*; troimhe-chèile: *really upset*.

Abairtean na Litreach: a’ gabhail cuairt air an tràigh: *taking a walk on the beach*; bha i fhèin agus Calum air cluich anns an uaimh sin gu tric: *she and Malcolm had played in that cave often*; a dh’fhàg ròn anns a’ ghainmhich: *which a seal left in the sand*; a’ dèanamh air na creagan air beulaibh na h-uamha: *making for the rocks in front of the cave*; air a’ chois chli bha còig òrdagan, mar a bhiodh dùil: *on the left foot there were five toes, as would be expected*; na shuidhe ann an oisean, bha a bràthair: *sitting in the corner was her brother*; chuir iad an gairdeanan timcheall a chèile: *they put their arms around each other*; cha robh an roghainn agam: *I didn’t have the choice*; thug ròn mi gu grunn na mara: *a seal took me to the bottom of the sea*; mar a bha mi a’ miannachadh o chionn fhada: *as I was desiring a long time ago*; bha craiceann eadar a mheuran mar gur e spòg lacha a bh’ aige: *there was skin between his fingers as if he had a webbed foot*; cha do chòrd e riut: *you didn’t like it*; bha iad ag iarraidh rudeigin bhuan: *they were wanting something from me*; bha mi dìreach a’ tarraing asad: *I was just teasing you*; cha robh mi ag iarraidh gun cailleadh thu i: *I wasn’t wanting you to lose it*; nach inns thu dhaibh gum faca tu mi: *that you won’t tell them that you saw me*; nach canadh i guth ri a pàrantan: *that she would say nothing to her parents*; bha i toilichte cabadaich leotha: *she was pleased to chat with them*; cha robh fios aig duine gum biodh Màiri a’ coinneachadh gu tric ri a bràthair anns an uaimh: *nobody knew that Mary would often meet with her brother in the cave*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: *dè thachair don òrdaig-mhòir agad?*: *what happened to your big toe?* Òrdag-mhòr is the Gaelic for ‘big toe’ and it is clearly a feminine noun. So, in the dative singular it is traditionally slenderised; hence we would say *don òrdaig-mhòir*, *mun òrdaig-mhòir* or *air an òrdaig-mhòir*.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: *fo mhulad: devastated, in extreme sadness.*

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