

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

A' Bhanarach agus an Sealgair (3)

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 1,422. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,118 corresponds to Litir 1,422. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and [www.learnGaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learn Gaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnGaelic.scot.

Tha mi a' dol a chur crìoch air an sgeul à Gallaibh – 'A' Bhanarach agus an Sealgair'. Ann am meadhan na h-oidhche, chuala an Gille Garbh fuaim air taobh a-muigh a bhothain. Dh'èirich e agus chunnaic e na bràithrean Calder a' tighinn dlùth, agus le droch rùn.

Thog e a bhogha ach chunnaic e gun robh an t-sreang briste. Chaidh e gu far an robh na sreangan eile agus bha iad uile gearrte. Thuig e gun robh Mànas Gunnach air brath a ghabhail air le bhith a' gearradh nan sreangan le a chorcaig – sin sgian bheag. Chaidh an Gille Garbh far an robh Mànas na chadal. Mharbh e e.

Bha fios aige – gun bhogha – nach fhaigheadh e a-mach beò. **Dh'fhàg e beannachd aig** a leannan, Miss Calder, agus chaidh e a-mach. Cha do mhair e fada, agus na bràithrean Calder a' losgadh saighdean air. Chaidh an Gille Garbh a thiodhlacadh far an do thuit e.

Cha ghabhadh Miss Calder gnothach ri a bràithrean bhon latha sin a-mach. Dh'fhuirich i anns a' bhothan far an robh i fhèin agus an Gille Garbh air a bhith cho sona còmhla. Ach bha i muladach. Agus bha i às aonais a cuid cruaidh. Dh'iomain na gilleann a crodh gu lèir air ais a Shrath Dhùn Bheathadh.

Leis mar a thachair, bha Iain Bàn Mòr à Dail a' Mhuilinn – oide no athair-dalta a' Ghille Ghairbh – a-nise na nàmhaid do na Calders. Nuair a chaidh cuid de dh'eich nan Calders air chall anns a' mhonadh, chaidh ceathrar de na bràithrean a-mach a choimhead air an son. Bha iad a' giùlan leotha crois-bhoghachan – buill-airm uabhasach fhèin cumhachdach.

Fhad 's a bha iad a' dol seachad air taigh Iain Bhàin ann an Dail a' Mhuilinn, loisg fear de na bràithrean air uinneag. Bha e an dùil gum biodh Iain Bàn Mòr na shuidhe taobh a-staigh dhith. Ach cha robh – cha robh e aig an taigh. Nuair a thill e dhachaigh, agus nuair a fhuair e-mach gun robh na Calders air oidhirp a dhèanamh a mharbhadh, chaidh e fhèin agus a thriùir mhac a-mach air an tòir.

An dèidh greis, fhuair Iain a-mach gun robh an ceathrar bhràithrean air an tearbadh o chèile. Bha dithis air a dhol a dh'ionnsaigh Allt nam Breac. Agus bha an dithis eile air a dhol suas Abhainn Theòrsa. Rinn Iain agus a mhic mar an ceudna. Chaidh dithis aca an tòir air an dithis ri taobh na h-aibhne. Agus chaidh an dithis eile an dèidh nan Calders a bh' air a dhol taobh Allt nam Breac. Rinn Iain Bàn Mòr agus

a mhic a' chùis. Thathar ag ràdh gun robh dithis de na Calders air an tiodhlacadh aig àite ris an canar **Linn nan Cat**.

Cha do mhair Miss Calder beò fada an dèidh bàs a leannain. Rinn i òran – cumha – ann an Gàidhlig. Chaidh eadar-theangachadh gu Beurla. 'S e 'Miss Calder's Lament' a chanas daoine ris ann am Beurla. Gu mì-mhortanach, cha do lorg mi na faclan tùsail Gàidhlig air a shon. Ma tha sibh fhèin eòlach air an òran ann an Gàidhlig bu mhath leam cluinntinn bhuaibh.

Tha am facal *corkag* airson sgian bheag a' nochdadh anns an òran, a' sealltainn gun robh am facal Gàidhlig *corcag* air a dhol a-steach don Bheurla ann an Gallaibh.

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Faclan na Litreach: Gallaibh: *Caithness*; banarach: *dairy maid*; sealgair: *hunter*; gearrte: *cut*; Mànas Gunnach: *Magnus Gunn*; corcag: *small knife*; Srath Dhùn Bheathadh: *Dunbeath Strath*; Dail a' Mhuilinn: *Dalnawillan*; oide no athair-dalta: *foster-father*; nàmhaid: *enemy*; crois-bhoghachan: *crossbows*; Allt nam Breac: *Altnabreac*; Abhainn Theòrsa: *Thurso River*; cumha: *lament*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Ann am meadhan na h-oidhche, chuala an Gille Garbh fuaim air taobh a-muigh a bhothain: *in the middle of the night, the Gille Garbh heard a sound outside his bothy*; chunnaic e na bràithrean Calder a' tighinn dlùth, agus le droch rùn: *he saw the Calder brothers coming close, with evil intent*; thog e a bhogha ach chunnaic e gun robh an t-sreang briste: *he picked up his bow but he saw that the string was broken*; nach fhaigheadh e a-mach beò: *that he wouldn't get out alive*; cha do mhair e fada: *he didn't survive long*; chaidh X a thiodhlacadh far an do thuit e: *X was buried where he fell*; cha ghabhadh Y gnothach ri a bràithrean bhon latha sin a-mach: *Y would have nothing to do with her brothers henceforth*; nuair a fhuair e-mach gun robh na Calders air oidhirp a dhèanamh a mharbhadh: *when he found out that the Calders had tried to kill him*; chaidh e fhèin agus a thriùir mhac a-mach air an tòir: *he and his three sons went out in pursuit of them*; gun robh an ceathrar bhràithrean air an tearbadh o chèile: *that the four brothers had separated from each other*; gu mì-mhortanach, cha do lorg mi na faclan tùsail Gàidhlig air a shon: *very unfortunately, I haven't found the original Gaelic words for it*; tha am facal *corkag* airson sgian bheag a' nochdadh anns an òran: *the word corkag for a small knife appears in the song*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Linn nan Cat: *I have interpreted this from an English-language version of the tale which gives 'Lenn-Na-Cat, which is a waterfall on the Thurso River, about two miles west of Glutt.' This is perhaps the significant waterfall, recorded on the maps as Eas Gluta 'waterfall of Glutt' which is south-west of Glutt on the Glutt Water [Uisge Gluta?], a tributary of the Thurso River. A short distance beyond this waterfall is Creag nan Cat 'the crag of the wildcats'. Linn nan Cat 'the pool of the cats' might be a pool on the river close by.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Dh'fhàg e beannachd aig a leannan: *he farewelled his sweetheart*.

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