

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Uilebheist Ratharsair (2)

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 981. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 677 corresponds to Litir 981.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an sgeulachd ‘MacMhuirich Ratharsair’. Bha an t-Uilebheist air cabhsair agus cruach-mhònach a thogail do MhacMhuirich, ach cha robh an sealgair riarachta. ‘Tha an leanabh agad air èirig fhathast,’ thuirt e.

‘Phàigh mi i dà thuras mu-thràth,’ ars an t-Uilebheist, le fearg.

‘Cha robh an sin ach an toiseach,’ thuirt MacMhuirich. ‘A-nise, togaidh thu taigh mòr dhomh. Bidh an tughadh air a dhèanamh de dh’itean eòin.’

‘Mo mhìle mallachd ort!’ thuirt an t-Uilebheist. Dh’èirich e agus dh’fhalbh e don choille. Anns a’ choille, dh’èigh e, ‘Gach craobh anns a’ choille **ach a-mhàin critheann a’ Chrainn-cheusaidh agus Droigheann-dubh a’ Chrùin**, thigibh agus dèanaibh taigh na ceilge!’ Thàinig fiodh bho na craobhan sin agus cha b’ fhada gus an robh an taigh air a thogail, ach a-mhàin gun robh e gun tughadh.

Bha MacMhuirich fhathast anns an taigh aige fhèin, agus mhothaich e gun robh e air fàs dorch. Choimhead e a-mach air an uinneig, agus dè chunnaic e ach ealtainnean – sgaothan de dh’eòin a bh’ air tighinn à gach oisean dhen domhan. Dh’fhàg gach eun ite air mullach an taigh ùir. Taobh a-staigh latha, bha an tughadh deiseil.

Nuair a thill an t-Uilebheist, thilg MacMhuirich a leanabh a-mach air an uinneig, ag ràdh, ‘thalla às an eilean seo agus thoir do chuilean leat!’

Dh’fhalbh an t-Uilebheist agus chan fhacas e bhon uair sin ann an Ratharsair. Ach rinn e mallachd air MacMhuirich nach biodh sealbh no fortan aige. Phòs MacMhuirich an ceann ùine agus bha trìùir mhac aige. Bha iad fhèin ’s an athair a-mach air a chèile fad na h-ùine. Cha robh ach aon charaid aig MacMhuirich agus b’ e sin an lethchiallach a bha na sgalaig dha. ’S e Fionnlagh an t-ainm a bh’ air.

Latha a bha seo sheòl MacMhuirich, a mhic agus Fionnlagh gu ruige Muideart. Air an t-slighe dhachaigh, stad iad ann an Canaigh. Bha iad ann ro fhada agus dh’iarr Baintighearna Chanaigh orra falbh, ged nach robh gaoth sam bith ann airson seòladh.

‘Chan eil sinn a’ dol a dh’iomradh a Ratharsair,’ thuirt na mic rin athair. ‘Nach iarr sibh gun tig a’ ghaoth?’

Dh’èigh MacMhuirich airson ‘gaoth an ear a thig às na creagan agus nach dèan cron oirnn.’ Agus dh’èirich gaoth shocair às an àird an ear. Ach cha robh i làidir gu leòr agus rinn a ghillean magadh air an athair airson a bhith meata. ‘Ceart gu leòr,’ thuirt MacMhuirich. Dh’èigh e airson ‘gaoth chruaidh às an àird a tuath.’ Cha robh sin fàbharach dhaibh agus rinn na gillean an tuilleadh fanaid air.

Bha MacMhuirich a-nise feargach. Dh'èigh e airson gaoth cho làidir 's gun reubadh i gaoisidean à each, gun spìonadh i fianach à monadh agus **gun tàirnneadh i bàirneach à creag**. Bha a mhic uile tinn le cur na mara. Cha robh ach MacMhuirich agus Fionnlagh a sheas ris a' chruadal. Air èiginn, ràinig iad Loch Aineort anns an Eilean Sgitheanach far an do chuir iad am bàta air tìr. Tha dùil gun do ràinig iad Ratharsair ach dè thachair dhaibh an uair sin, chan eil fhios domh.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: riarachta: *satisfied*; iomagaineach: *anxious*; Muideart: *Moidart*; Canaigh: *Canna*; fèath: *windless calm*; gaoth an ear: *an east wind*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Bha an t-Uilebheist air cabhsair agus cruach-mhònach a thogail do MacMhuirich: *the monster had built a causeway and peat-stack for MacVurich*; air èirig fhathast: *still under ransom*; phàigh mi i dà thuras mu-thràth: *I've already paid twice*; bidh an tughadh air a dhèanamh de dh'itean eòin: *the thatch will be made of birds' feathers*; mo mhìle mallachd ort: *a thousand curses on you*; dèanaibh taigh na ceilge: *make the house of deceit*; dè chunnaic e ach ealtainnean – sgaothan de dh'èoin à gach oisean dhen domhan: *what did he see but flocks of birds – flocks of birds from every corner of the earth*; dh'fhàg gach eun ite air mullach an taigh ùir: *every bird left a feather on the roof of the new house*; thilg X a leanabh a-mach air an uinneig: *X threw the baby out through the window*; thalla às an eilean seo agus thoir do chuilean leat: *get out of this island and take your pup with you*; chan fhacas e bhon uair sin: *it was never seen again*; rinn e mallachd air: *it cursed him*; a-mach air a chèile fad na h-ùine: *falling out with each other all the time*; an lethchiallach a bha na sgalaig dha: *the 'halfwit' [lethchiallach is not a PC term] who was his servant*; dh'iarr Baintighearna Chanaigh orra falbh, ged nach robh gaoth ann: *the Lady of Canna asked them to leave, although there was no wind*; chan eil sinn a' dol a dh'iomradh a Ratharsair, thuir na mic: *we're not going to row to Raasay, said the sons*; rinn a ghillean magadh air airson a bhith meata: *his sons mocked him for being timid*; an tuilleadh fanaid: *more mockery*; gun spìonadh i fianach à monadh: *that it would rip the dry grass from the hill*; chan eil fhios domh: *I don't know (alternative to chan eil fhios agam)*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Gach craobh anns a' choille **ach a-mhàin critheann a' Chrainn-cheusaidh agus Droigheann-dubh a' Chrùn:** *every tree in the wood except the aspen of the crucifixion tree and the blackthorn of the crown. Both these species were commonly recognised by the Gaels as 'cursed' trees, associated with the crucifixion of Christ.*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: **gun tàirnneadh i bàirneach à creag:** *that it would rip a limpet from a rock. The wind has to be strong to do that!*

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