

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Taibhs Lachlann mhic Mhaighstir Alasdair

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 1,359. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,055 corresponds to Litir 1,359. 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 innse dhuibh mu Chailleach Bheag nam Bòcan – Ada Goodrich-Freer – a chruinnich beul-aithris bhon t-Sagart Èirisgeach, Mgr Ailein. No a chleachd beul-aithris a chruinnich an sagart.

Bha Mgr Ailein dripeil ann a bhith a' cruinneachadh sgeulachdan is naidheachdan bho dhaoine. Cha robh innealan-clàraidh fuaim ann agus b' fheudar dha a h-uile càil a chuala e a sgrìobhadh.

Am measg na chruinnich e, bha sgeulachdan mu thaibhsean agus bòcain. Tha mi airson tè dhiubh innse dhuibh an-dràsta. 'S ann à Uibhist a Deas a tha i. 'S e an tiotal a th' oirre 'Lachlann mac Mhaighstir Alasdair agus an Geama Iomain'.

Bha Lachlann mac Mhaighstir Alasdair a' fuireach ann an Dreumasdal ann an Uibhist a Deas. B' e a bhràthair am bàrd ainmeil Alasdair mac Mhaighstir Alasdair. Bha Lachlann na fhear-taca ann an Dreumasdal. Aig aon àm, a rèir aithris, bha e na Chaitligeach, ach chuir e a chùl ris a' chreideamh.

Nuair a bha e uchd bàis, chuir e fios a-mach gu sagart. Ach cha do leig feadhainn eile leis an t-sagart a dhol faisg air. Mar sin, chaochail e às aonais deas-ghnàth bàis na h-Eaglaise. Bha iad ag ràdh an uair sin gun robh a thaibhs gun fhois. Bhiodh a thaibhs air seachran gus an tigeadh Latha a' Bhreitheanaidh.

Beagan bhliadhnaichean an dèidh sin, timcheall deireadh an ochdamh linn deug, bha gille òg à Dalabrog a' cluich iomain air an tràigh. B' esan Iain mac Dhòmhail Òig 'ic Nill. Bha ùpraid ann mu thadhal – **an deach a chur gus nach deach**. Bha Iain feargach agus bha e ri fìor dhroch chainnt. Fhad 's a bha an ùpraid a' dol, chunnaic na balaich fear iongantach mòr na sheasamh aig an tiùrr aig ceann shuas a' chladaich. Ghabh a h-uile balach eagail agus theich iad cho luath 's a bheireadh an casan iad.

Bliadhnaichean an dèidh sin, nuair a bha Iain na làn-duine, fhuair e obair mar sgalag aig an Urramach Rothach, ministear ann an Dreumasdal. B' e an obair aig Iain a bhith a' cumail sùil air an arbhar fad na h-oidhche, agus an crodh a chumail air falbh.

Oidhche a bha seo, thàinig mac a' mhinistear, Aonghas, don bhothan far an robh Iain. Dh'inns e do dh'Iain gun robh an crodh ag ithe an fheòir. Dh'fhalbh Iain a-mach. Chan fhac' e an crodh, ach chunnaic e fear mòr mòr nach b' aithne dha. Thionndaidh e agus ghabh e rathad eile, ach bha am fear mòr air a bheulaibh. Thionndaidh e a-rithist agus, a-rithist, bha am fear mòr **na rathad**.

Bha an t-eagal air Iain. Dh'èigh e, 'A Dhia 's a Mhoire, glacaibh m' anam.'
Fhreagair am fear mòr, 'Tha sin glè mhath, ach cha b' e sin a' chainnt a bh'
agad nuair a chuala mise mu dheireadh thu.'

Dh'aidich am fear mòr gur e e fhèin a chuir eagal air Iain agus càch nuair a bha iad a' cluich iomain air an tràigh. Grunn tursan an dèidh sin, chunnaic Iain an dearbh thaibhs. Bha còmhraidh eatarra, agus dh'aidich an creutair os-nàdarrach gum b' esan taibhs Lachlainn mhic Mhaighstir Alasdair.

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Faclan na Litreach: innealan-clàraidh fuaime: *audio-recording devices*; taibhsean agus bòcain: *ghosts and spectres*; Dreumasdal: *Drimsdale*; sgalag: *servant, lackey*; arbhar: *grain, corn (growing)*; crodh: *cattle*.

Abairtean na Litreach: a chleachd beul-aithris a chruinnich an sagart: *who used oral tradition that the priest collected*; bha Mgr Ailein dripeil ann a bhith a' cruinneachadh sgeulachdan is naidheachdan bho dhaoine: *Father Allan was very busy collecting stories and anecdotes from people*; b' fheudar dha a h-uile càil a chuala e a sgrìobhadh: *he had to write down everything he heard*; taibhsearachd is bòcain 's a leithid sin: *the second sight and ghosts and things like that*; X agus an Geama Iomain: *X and the Shinty Game*; b' e a bhràthair am bàrd ainmeil: *his brother was the famous bard*; chuir e a chùl ris a' chreideamh: *he turned his back on the religion*; nuair a bha e uchd bàis, chuir e fios a-mach gu sagart: *when he was at death's door, he sent for a priest*; chaochail e às aonais deas-ghnàth bàis na h-Eaglaise: *he died without [receiving] the death-rites of the Church*; gun robh a thaibhs gun fhois: *that his ghost was without rest*; gun do dh'fhuiling X peanas airson an creideamh aige a thrèigsinn: *that X received a punishment for abandoning his religion*; air seachran gus an tigeadh Latha a' Bhreitheanais: *wandering until Judgement Day [would come]*; bha e ri fìor dhroch chainnt: *he was using very bad language*; fear iongantach mòr na sheasamh: *an enormous man standing*; aig an tiùrr aig ceann shuas a' chladaich: *at the tide line on the upper part of the beach*; cho luath 's a bheireadh an casan iad: *as quickly as their legs would carry them*; nach b' aithne dha: *that he didn't know*; A Dhia 's a Mhoire, glacaibh m' anam: *God and Mary, preserve my soul*; cha b' e sin a' chainnt a bh' agad nuair a chuala mise mu dheireadh thu: *that wasn't the language you used when I last heard you*; dh'aidich an creutair os-nàdarrach: *the supernatural creature admitted*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Bha ùpraid ann mu thadhal – **an deach a chur gus nach deach**: *there was uproar about a goal – was it scored or not*. Some of the terminology we use in football comes from shinty and here is an example. For 'score a goal' in both sports we say 'cuir tadhal'. Chuir iad tadhal dìreach ro letheach-slighe 'they scored a goal just befor half-time.' Feumaidh sinn trì tadhail a chur airson an geama seo a bhuannachadh 'we'll have to score three goals to win this game.'

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: bha am fear mòr **na rathad**: *the big man was in his way*.

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