

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Sithichean Dhùn Ad

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 1,374. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,070 corresponds to Litir 1,374. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

A bheil sibh eòlach air Dùn Ad ann an Earra-Ghàidheal? Tha e na chreag ainmeil eadar Ceann Loch Gilp agus Cill Mhàrtainn. Tha e ag èirigh à magh ris an canar A' Mhòine Mhòr. Ged a tha an talamh rudeigin fliuch, tha feadhainn ri obair tuathanais timcheall Dhùn Ad. Bu toigh leam innse dhuibh mu aon tuathanach às an sgìre sin o **chionn deagh ghreis**.

Oidhche a bha seo, bha an tuathanach san leabaidh. Bha teine mònach anns an t-seòmar. Ri taobh an teine bha soitheach bainne a' blàthachadh. Bha an tuathanach a' dol a thogail a' bharra bhuaithe an ath mhadainn.

Fhad 's a bha e a' coimhead gu sàmhach, thàinig gràisg de sìthichean a-steach. Bha tàcharan aca. Bha iad a' coimhead airson uisge airson an leanabh a ghlanadh – a dhèanadh e na bu duilghe a thoirt bhuapa. Cha robh uisge sam bith anns an t-seòmar. Mar sin, chleachd na sìthichean am bàrr bhon t-soitheach bhainne.

Cha do thuig na sìthichean mar a bha an ùine a' ruith. Chualas coileach a' gairm. Bha aig na sìthichean ri tilleadh don t-sìthean aca. Bha uiread de chabhaig orra 's gun do dh'fhàg iad poca beag às an dèidh.

Nuair a dh'èirich an tuathanach, dhòirt e am bainne a-mach air an fheur. Thàinig na coin aige agus dh'òl iad am bàrr. Thuit iad marbh san spot.

Dh'fhosgail an tuathanach am poca agus lorg e rudan annasach na bhroinn. Bha saighead bheag chloiche ann dhen t-seòrsa ris an canar *saighead sionn* – ann am Beurla *elf-arrow*. Bhathar a' creidsinn gun robh a leithid air a dèanamh anns an t-sìthean agus gum biodh na sìthichean gan cleachdadh airson daoine a dhèanamh tinn. Bha iad air an dèanamh de chlach-spoir no *flint*.

Fhuair an tuathanach a-mach, nam biodh an saighead sionn air a cur fon chluasaig aig duine tinn, gum biodh feadhainn eile a' tuigsinn co-dhiù mhaireadh e beò a rèir coltas an fhallais air a bhathais.

Cuideachd anns a' phoca, bha bobhla beag anns am biodh na sìthichean a' dèanamh lite, agus buill-chloiche. **Chuirte** na buill ann an cuman uisge, agus bhiodh an t-uisge air a thoirt do chrodh a bha tinn. Thigeadh piseach orra an uair sin.

Dè thachair do na sìthichean agus na rudan aca? A rèir beul-aithris, chùm sliochd an tuathanaich na rudan agus cò aige tha fios nach eil iad aca fhathast. Agus na sìthichean? Uill, am biodh duine againn deònach a ràdh nach eil iad am falach anns an t-sìthean fhathast?!

Tha tòrr rudan tarraingeach – agus Gàidhealach – rin lorg anns an sgìre timcheall Dhùn Ad. Bha daingneach ann a bha na phrìomh àros aig rìghrean seann rìoghachd Dhal Riata. Agus tha lorg-coise ainmeil anns a' chreig gu h-àrd. A rèir beul-aithris bhiodh na rìghrean air am pòsadh don talamh le bhith a' cur cas ann.

Ach cò chruthaich an lorg-coise? Tha beul-aithris ag innse dhuinn gur e Oisean a bh' ann. Oisean mac Fhinn. Bha e a' sealg sa mhonadh nuair a thionndaidh damh fiadhaich air. Leum Oisean às an àite agus thàinig a chas sìos air creag Dhùn Ad, a' fàgail na luirg-coise a chì sinn an-diugh.

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Faclan na Litreach: Dùn Ad: *Dunadd*; Earra-Ghàidheal: *Argyll*; an dà-shealladh: *second sight*; teine mònach: *a peat fire*; tàcharan: *changeling*; dhòirt: *poured*; clach-spoir: *flint*; cluasag: *pillow*; lite: *porridge*; sliochd: *descendants*; daingneach: *fortress*; Oisean mac Fhinn: *Oisean (Ossian) the son of Fionn*.

Abairtean na Litreach: ag èirigh à magh ris an canar A' Mhòine Mhòr: *rises from a plain called 'the great moss'*; tha feadhainn ri obair tuathanais: *some people are involved in farming*; bha soitheach bainne a' blàthachadh: *a container of milk was warming*; a' dol a thogail a' bharra bhuaithe an ath mhadainn: *going to skim off the cream next morning*; thàinig gràisg de shìthichean a-steach: *a mob of fairies came in*; a' coimhead airson uisge airson an leanabh a ghlanadh: *looking for water to clean the baby*, a dhèanadh e na bu duilghe a thoirt bhuapa: *which would make it more difficult to take it from them*; cha do thuig na sìthichean mar a bha an ùine a' ruith: *the fairies didn't appreciate how the time was passing*; chualas coileach a' gairm: *a cockerel was heard crowing*; bha uiread de chabhaig orra 's gun do dh'fhàg iad poca beag às an dèidh: *they were in such a hurry that they left a small bag behind them*; thàinig na coin aige agus dh'òl iad am bàrr: *his dogs came and they drank the cream*; thuit iad marbh san spot: *they immediately fell dead*; bha saighead bheag chloiche ann dhen t-seòrsa ris an canar saighead sionn: *there was a little stone arrow of the type called a mysterious arrow ('elf-arrow')*; gum biodh na sìthichean ga losgadh air daoine airson an dèanamh tinn: *that the fairies would fire them at people to make them ill*; a' tuigsinn co-dhiù mhaireadh e beò a rèir coltas an fhallais air a bhathais: *understanding if he would survive according to the appearance of sweat on his brow*; thigeadh piseach orra: *they would get better*; cò chruthaich an lorg-coise?: *who created the footprint?*; bha e a' sealg sa mhonadh nuair a thionndadh damh fiadhaich air: *he was hunting on the hill when a wild stag turned on him*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Chuirte na buill ann an cuman uisge: *the balls would be put in a pail of water. This is a passive conditional form, which puts a terminal -te on the lenited root of the verb. You will also hear chuirist.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: o chionn deagh ghreis: *a good while ago*.

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