

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Drochaid an Obh (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 1,376. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,072 corresponds to Litir 1,376. 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 dhuibh mu Dhrochaid an Obh – na *Gizzen Briggs* – oitir-ghainmhich aig beul Linne Dhòrnaich. Tha sgeulachd ann mu mar a chaidh Drochaid an Obh a thogail. Tha i a' dol rudeigin mar seo:

Faisg air Tunga ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh bha ceann-cinnidh aig Clann 'ic Aoidh a' fuireach. Bha a leannan a' fuireach air taobh thall Caolas Thunga bhuaithe. Cha robh an t-àite freagarrach airson bàt'-aiseig agus bha aig a' cheann-cinnidh ri dhol gu ceann an loch-mhara air tìr airson a dhol a chèilidh air a leannan. 'S e astar fada a bh' ann. Chuir an ceann-cinnidh fios air sìthichean na sgìre. Dh'iarr e orra drochaid a thogail.

'Cha bhi sinne a' togail dhrochaidean,' thuirt iad. 'Feumaidh sibh a dhol a bhruidhinn ris a' bhana-bhuidsich.'

Chaidh an ceann-cinnidh a bhruidhinn ris a' bhana-bhuidsich. 'Chan urrainn dhòmhsa taic a thoirt dhut,' thuirt a' bhana-bhuidseach. 'Cuir fios air a' bhoireannach ghlic a tha a' fuireach air an Tairbeart ann am Machair Rois.'

Chuir an ceann-cinnidh fear dhen luchd-cinnidh aige – **fear dom b' ainm Aonghas** – gu ruige an Tairbeart. Lorg e a' bhean ghlic. Thuirt e rithe gun robh a cheann-cinnidh ag iarraidh drochaid a thogail thar Caolas Thunga. Thug a' bhean ghlic bogsa dha. 'Thoir seo don mhaighstir agad,' thuirt i.

Bha amharas aig Aonghas mu na bha am broinn a' bhogsa oir dh'fhairich e rudeigin a' gluasad ann. Cha robh e air a dhol fada nuair a stad e. Dh'fhosgail e am bogsa. Ach leum na ceudan de sìthichean a-mach. Cha robh dòigh ann airson an cur air ais. Bha na sìthichean ag èigheachd air, 'Thoir dhuinn obair, a mhaighstir! Tha sinn feumach air obair!'

'Mo chreach,' thuirt Aonghas ris fhèin. 'Dè nì mi?!' Thug e sùil timcheall air. Chunnaic e Cnoc Bhaile Dhubhthaich a bha an uair sin còmhdaichte le fraoch. 'Thallaibh agus spionaibh am fraoch gu lèir air a' chnoc ud,' thuirt e.

Fhad 's a bha iad air falbh, dhùin Aonghas am bogsa. Thòisich e air a shlighe gu ruige Dùthaich MhicAoidh. Cha bhiodh fios aig a mhaighstir mu na sìthichean! Cha robh e air a dhol fada, ge-tà, nuair a thill na sìthichean. Bha Cnoc Bhaile Dhubhthaich a-nise lom de fhraoch. 'Thoir dhuinn obair!' thuirt na sìthichean ris.

Thug Aonghas sùil air Linne Dhòrnaich. 'Ceart,' thuirt e, 'togaibh drochaid thar na linne. Dèanaibh clachan dhen ghainmhich. Dèanaibh ròpan dhith cuideachd.'

Ceanglaibh na clachan-gainmhich ri chèile leis na ròpan-gainmhich. Cumaibh oirbh gus am bi comas aig duine coiseachd thar na linne ann am brògan tioram.'

Dh'fhalbh Aonghas. Ghabh e bàta a bheireadh e gu Dùthaich MhicAoidh. Agus dh'fhàg e na sìthichean a' togail na drochaid. Bha iad a' dèanamh adhartas. Ach an uair sin thigeadh an làn agus bhiodh an obair aca air a sgrios.

Chì muinntir Bhaile Dhubhthaich far a bheil na sìthichean ag obair air – mar a chanas na Gàidheil – Drochaid an Obh – gun fhiosta nach tig an obair gu crìch a-chaidh. Uaireannan bidh muinntir a' bhaile a' cluinntinn fuaim bhon drochaid. Math dh'fhaodte gur e fuaim nan tonn a th' ann. Ach tha cuid ag ràdh gur e sin fuaim nan sìthichean a' gearan oir tha e a' fàilneachadh orra crìoch a chur air togail na drochaid thar na linne.

* * * * *

Faclan na Litreach: Drochaid an Obh: *'the bridge of the evil spirit' (Gizzen Briggs in English);* oitir-ghainmhich: *sandbank;* Tunga: *Tongue;* Dùthaich MhicAoidh: *the Mackay country of N. Sutherland ('Reay country');* luchd-cinnidh: *clansmen;* Caolas Thunga: *Kyle of Tongue;* lom: *bare;* Linne Dhòrnaich: *Dornoch Firth.*

Abairtean na Litreach: Freagarrach airson bàt'-aiseig: *suitable for a ferry;* bha aig a' cheann-chinnidh ri dhol gu ceann an loch-mhara: *the clan chief had to go to the head of the sea loch;* airson a dhol a chèilidh air a leannan: *to visit his sweetheart;* chuir X fios air sìthichean na sgìre: *X sent for the area's fairies;* feumaidh sibh a dhol a bhruidhinn ris a' bhana-bhuidsich: *you must go and speak to the witch;* a tha a' fuireach air an Tairbeart ann am Machair Rois: *who lives in Tarbat in Easter Ross;* bha amharas aig Aonghas mu na bha am broinn a' bhogsa: *Angus was suspicious about what was inside the box;* dh'fhairich e rudeigin a' gluasad ann: *he felt something move in it;* leum na ceudan de shìthichean a-mach: *hundreds of fairies jumped out;* dè nì mi?: *what shall I do?;* Cnoc Bhaile Dhubhthaich a bha an uair sin còmhdaichte le fraoch: *Tain Hill that was then covered with heather;* thallaibh agus spìonaibh am fraoch gu lèir: *go and pull all the heather;* dèanaibh clachan dhen ghainmhich: *make bricks of the sand;* gus am bi comas aig duine coiseachd thar na linne ann am brògan tioram: *until a man will be able to walk across the firth in dry shoes;* thigeadh an làn agus bhiodh an obair aca air a sgrios: *the [high] tide would come and their work would be destroyed;* fuaim nan tonn: *the sound of the waves;* fuaim nan sìthichean a' gearan: *the sound of the fairies complaining;* tha e a' fàilneachadh orra crìoch a chur air: *they are unable to finish.*

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Chaidh an ceann-cinnidh a bhruidhinn ris a' bhana-bhuidsich: *the clan chief went to speak to the witch.* 'a bhruidhinn' is a lenited form of the verbal noun which can be used following the verb 'rach'. Here are other examples: thèid mi a chèilidh air *'I'll go to visit him';* tha mi a' dol a bhruidhinn rithe *'I'm going to speak to her';* chaidh e a thional nan caorach *'he went to gather the sheep'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: fear dom b' ainm Aonghas: *a man called ('who had the name') Angus.*

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