



## Stioca Cù Dubh Mhic a' Phì - The Command Given to McPhee's Black Dog

### Stioca Cù Dubh Mhic a' Phì

Tha e air innse gu robh fear, Eoghainn Mac a' Phì, shuas anns a' Phàirc Leodhasach, agus is e sealgair a bh' ann, agus bha dà no trì de choin aige. Ach bha aon chù aige, an cu dubh, agus cha robh càil a dh'fheum ann. Cha deanadh e càil. Cha deanadh e sealg. Cha deanadh e muir no tìr, no caoraich no dad, agus bha na càirdean uile ag iarraidh air Mac a' Phì cur as don chù. 'O', chanadh e. 'Cha chuir. Tha latha fhèin a' feitheamh air a' chù', chanadh e a h-uile uair.

Ach an latha bha seo bha iad a muigh a' sealg. 'S e an cù dubh a bha' aige na chois, agus thàinig an oidhche air 's chaidh e a steach do uamha aig Loch Claidh, shuas aig cladach na Pàirc, agus bha e a' ròstadh pìos dhe'n fhèidh a bha e air a mharbhadh air an teine. Bha bior aige, pìos fhiodha troimhe, agus bha e ga thionndadh ris an teine ann an sin. Chuala e cuid eigin no rud eigin aig doras na h-uamha. Dh'èirich a' chalg air a' chù dubh an àirde gu leir ach fhuair e air a chasg.

Nochd boireannach beag, breagha a-steach, cho breagha 's a chunnaic e riamh, agus dh'fhoighnich e dhith, 'Cò as a thainig thu?' ars esan. 'Thàinig mi,' ars ise, 'à Eilean Shail'. 'S e eilean beag a tha sin ann am beul Loch Shiophort, agus dh'innis i dha càite an robh i a' dol. Bha i a' dol a dh' àit eigin shìos ceann shìos na Pàirc. Ghabh e uabhas, thighinn a sgìre Shail mu'n tìde ud de dh'oidhche, leithid siud de bhoireannach breagha, ach cha do dh'fhoighnich e an còrr.

'Bheil an t-acras ort?' 'Tha,' ars ise. 'An gabh thu pàirt dheth na siud?' agus thug e dhith pìos den fheoil a bh' aige dha ròstadh agus shluig i sìos e, dìreach mar gu sluigeadh leomhan no math-ghamhainn e. 'A bheil thu ag iarraidh tuilleadh?' ars esan. 'Tha mi ag iarraidh tuilleadh,' 's thug e dhith tuilleadh, agus tuilleadh, agus mu dheireadh cha robh aige ach glé bheag air fhàgail. 'O,' ars esan, 'chan fhaigh thu an còrr. Chan eil ann ach na ni chùis dhomh fhein 's dha'n cù dubh'.

'Tha mise ag iarraidh,' ars ise, 'tuilleadh, air an no cha'n fhiach do bheatha,' ach dhiult e, agus ann am prioba na sùla dh'atharraich a cruth. 'S e 'n uile-bheist a bh' ann an sin, an t-each-uisge, am beathach uabhasach a bh' ann. Stioc e an cù dubh, 's siud iad na cheile, an cù dubh 's an t-each-uisge.

Dh'fhalbh iad a-mach, sìos, sìos an gleann, sìos an gleann. Bha e a' cluinntinn sgèamhail a' choin, 's sgèamhail na beiste. Bha seo a'dol air adhart fad na h-oidhche, 's mu dheireadh mus tàinig an latha, chaidh a h-uile càil tosdach. An uair a thàinig a' ghrian an àirde chaidh e sìos, agus bha làrach ann an siud coltach far an robh an cath, an t-sabaist.

Ràinig e an cladach, 's air bruaich a' chladaich fhuair e sgamhannan a' choin. Dh'aithnich e gur e sin a bh' ann, ach cha robh sgial air an each-uisge, ach shàbhail an cù e. Siud am feum airson an robh an cù dubh. Agus chuala sibh am facal a bha ag radh:

Stioca cù dubh Mhic a' Phì, dh'fhalbh e 's cha do thill e riamh.

### The Command Given to McPhee's Black Dog

It is said that there once was a man, Ewen McPhee, who lived in Park on the Island of Lewis, and he was a hunter who had two or three dogs. But one of his dogs, the black dog, was useless. It would not do a thing. It would not hunt. It would not work on sea or land, or with sheep, in fact it did nothing, and all Mr. McPhee's relatives wanted to put the dog down. 'Oh', he would say. 'I won't do that. The dog will have its day,' he would say every time.

Well, this day they were out hunting. He had the black dog with him, and when nightfall came upon him he went into a cave at 'Loch Claidh', up at the Park shore. He was roasting a piece of deer he had killed earlier on the fire. He had a stick, a bit of wood and while he was turning the fire, he heard someone or something at the entrance of the cave. The black dog's hair stood on end but he managed to calm it down.

A small, beautiful lady appeared, as beautiful as he had ever seen, and he asked her, 'From where did you come?' 'I came from Eilean Shail,' she replied. That is a small island at the mouth of Loch Seaforth. She told him that she was going somewhere down the other end of Park. He was astonished that she came from the 'Sail' area at that time of night, such a beautiful lady, but he refrained from asking any more.

'Are you hungry?' 'Yes' she replied. 'Will you partake of this?' and he passed a bit of the meat he was roasting to her, which she devoured just as a lion or bear would. 'Would you like some more?' he asked. 'Yes, I would like some more', so he gave her some more, and more, and more until there was only a little left. 'Oh', he exclaimed, 'You cannot have any more, as there is only enough left to do myself and the black dog'.

'I want more,' she maintained 'or your life will not be worth living!' But he denied her it and in the blinking of an eye, her whole image changed. He was confronted with a monster, like a sea horse, a terrible beast. He commanded the black dog to go for the beast, and there they were, the black dog and the sea horse tearing into each other.

Away they tumbled down the glen, away far down the glen. He could hear the howling of the dog and the screech of the beast. This went on all night until almost daybreak when everything went quiet. At sunrise he ventured down until he came across what appeared to be the site of battle.

He reached the edge of the shore, where he found the remains of the dog. He recognized the remains, but there was no sight of the beast, but the black dog had saved him. That was the black dog's purpose, and you have all heard the saying:

The command given to McPhee's black dog. It obeyed, but it never returned.

[ends]

**AN ARCHIVE RECORD FROM THE ANGUS MACLEOD ARCHIVE [www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk](http://www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk)**

Author: Angus Macleod

Date:

Original document title: Stioca Cu Dubh Mhic a' Phì - The Command Given to McPhee's Black Dog

Location in physical archive: Series K, File 2, Section 43

NRAS reference: NRAS 4336/1/9/2

© Angus Macleod Archive