

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 122 (which corresponds to Litir 426). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk.

An t-seachdain sa chaidh bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun t-seann sgeulachd *Táin Bó Cuailnge*. Bha arm Chonnacht agus arm Uladh an aghaidh a chèile. Bha Banrigh Chonnacht – Medb – ag iarraidh tarbh donn. Bha an tarbh donn aig na h-Ultaich. Rinn Cuchulainn an gnothach air a h-uile gaisgeach aig arm Chonnacht. Ach nochd a bhràthair dalta, Ferdiad, na aghaidh. Cha robh Cuchulainn ag iarraidh sabaid leis.

Ach cha robh dol-às ann. Airson trì latha bha Cuchulainn is Ferdiad a' sabaid le chèile. Cha robh duine dhiubh a' buannachadh. Ghabh Cuchulainn an cuthach. Thilg e an sleagh aige. Bha an sleagh os-nàdarrach. Fhuair Ferdiad bàs. Bha an tàmailt air Cuchulainn. Dh'fhàg e am blàr.

Dh'fhalbh arm Medb. Bha an tarbh donn aca. Bha iad a' dol a Chonnacht leis an tarbh dhonn. Ach thàinig saighdearan Uladh às an dèidh. Bha batail ann. Rinn na h-Ultaich a' chùis. Thug arm Uladh an tarbh donn dhachaigh leotha.

Air an rathad dhachaigh thachair an tarbh donn ris an tarbh mhath aig Ailill, Rìgh Chonnacht (an duine aig Medb). Thug am fear donn ionnsaigh air an fhear eile. Fad latha is oidhche bha iad a' sabaid. Bhuannaich am fear donn.

Thachair a h-uile càil a tha sin ann an Èirinn. Ach tha àite aig Alba anns a' ghnòthach. Oir thathar ag ràdh gun do dh'ionnsaich Cuchulainn na sgilean aige anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Bha sin fo stiùir na banrigh ainmeil, Sgàthach.

Tha feadhainn a tha measail air camanachd – spòrs traidiseanta nan Gàidheal – ag innse an stòiridh a leanas: O chionn fhada, thàinig gaisgeach Èireannach a dh'Alba. Le trì ceumannan mòra, thàinig e don Eilean Sgitheanach. Fhuair e foghlam aig a' Bhanrigh Sgàthach. Bha e ag ionnsachadh mu armachd is gaol. Mar thiodhlac, thug e an gèam – camanachd – do mhuintir na h-Alba. Cò bha ann? Uill, chanainn gu bheil e gu math coltach ri Cuchulainn.

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Faclan is abairtean: Bha arm Chonnacht agus arm Uladh an aghaidh a chèile: *the army of Connaught and the army of Ulster were against each other*; bha an tarbh donn aig na h-Ultaich: *the Ulstermen had the brown bull*; rinn Cuchulainn an gnothach air a h-uile gaisgeach: *Cuchullin defeated every hero*; nochd a bhràthair

dalta: *his foster-brother*; cha robh dol-às ann: *there was no escape*; cha robh duine dhiubh a' buannachadh: *neither of them was winning*; ghabh Cuchulainn an cuthach: *Cuchullin went into a frenzy*; bha an sleagh os-nàdarrach: *the spear was supernatural*; bha an tàmailt air Cuchulainn: *Cuchullin was horrified*; dh'fhàg e am blàr: *he left the battlefield*; leis an tarbh dhonn: *with the brown bull*; thàinig saighdearan Uladh às an dèidh: *Ulster soldiers came after them*; rinn na h-Ultaich a' chùis: *the Ulstermen won*; thug am fear donn ionnsaigh air an fhear eile: *the brown one attacked the other one*; fad latha is oidhche bha iad a' sabaid: *for a day and night they were fighting*; gun do dh'ionnsaich Cuchulainn na sgilean aige anns an Eilean Sgitheanach: *that Cuchullin learned his skills on the Isle of Skye*; a dhìon Ulaidh: *which protected Ulster*; an stòiridh a leanas: *the story that follows*; trì ceumanna mòra: *three big steps*; fhuair e foghlam aig a' Bhànrigh Sgàthach: *he was educated by Queen Sgàthach*; mar thiodhlaic, thug e an gèam – camanachd – do mhuintir na h-Alba: *as a present, he gave a gift – shinty – to the people of Scotland*.

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