

# **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 691 (which corresponds to Litir 995). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*I'm going to finish my account of Fearchar a' Ghunna. He had a good opinion of himself. He spoke no English, but he was going to English services in Killearnan Church. The minister asked him why he was going.*

*'I'm trying to be like the people of my own status, the gentlemen of the country,' replied Farquhar. 'There is no pride in going to listen to a Gaelic sermon that is only listened to by ordinary people!'*

*Farquhar was famous for his wit. A young man on the Black Isle said to him that he would ask him a question he couldn't answer. They came together in front of many people. The young man asked him the question – 'What's the colour of Satan's hair?'*

*Without any delay, Farquhar replied, 'Are you so long in Satan's service and you don't know the colour of your master's hair?!' Everybody laughed.*

*One day, Farquhar met a minister. The minister asked him if he knew where God was. Farquhar replied, 'Won't you tell me where*

*Tha mi a' dol a chur crìoch air mo chunntas mu Fhearchar a' Ghunna. Bha deagh bheachd aige air fhèin. Cha robh Beurla aige, ach bha e a' dol gu seirbheisean Beurla ann an Eaglais Chill Iùrnain. Dh'fhaighnich am ministear dheth carson a bha e a' dol ann.*

*'Tha mi a' feuchainn ri bhith mar mo choimeas inbhe, daoine-ualas na dùthaich,' fhreagair Fearchar. 'Chan eil mòr-chùis ann a bhith a' dol a chluinntinn searmon Gàidhlig a th' air èisteachd le sluagh cumanta a-mhàin!'*

*Bha Fearchar ainmeil airson a chuid eirmseachd. Thuirtear fear òg anns an Eilean Dubh ris gun cuireadh e ceist air dha nach biodh freagairt aige. Thàinig iad cruinn còmhla air beulaibh mòran dhaoine. Chuir am fear òg a' cheist – 'Dè an dath a th' air falt Shàtain?'*

*Gun dàil sam bith, fhreagair Fearchar, 'A bheil thu cho fad ann an seirbheis Shàtain agus nach eil eòlas agad air dath falt do mhaighstir?!' Rinn a h-uile duine gàire.*

*Latha a bha seo, thachair Fearchar ri ministear. Dh'fhaighnich am ministear dheth an robh fios aige cà' robh Dia. Fhreagair Fearchar, 'Nach*

*He isn't?*

*'You're quite correct,' agreed the minister. 'God is everywhere.'*

*'Oh, I don't think He is everywhere,' replied Farquhar cryptically.*

*The miller in Redcastle heard about this conversation. The miller asked Farquhar, 'Will you name for me, Farquhar, any place where God is not?'*

*'God is not in the heart of the unconverted man,' replied Farquhar.*

*Another time, Farquhar was in a manse. The minister asked him if the death scared him. 'Not at all,' said Farquhar.*

*'Doesn't anything scare you?' said the minister.*

*'Oh, aye,' replied Farquhar. 'I fear that which is on the far side of death!'*

*Farquhar reached the other side of death in 1868 in Inverness. He was eighty four. He was buried in the Tomnahurich Cemetery. There is no stone or slab marking his grave.*

*inns thu dhòmhsa càite nach eil E?'*

*'Tha thu glè cheart,' dh'aontaich am ministear. 'Tha Dia anns a h-uile h-àite.'*

*'O, chan eil mi a' smuaineachadh gu bheil E anns a h-uile h-àite,' fhreagair Fearchar gu dìomhair.*

*Chuala am muillear anns a' Chaisteal Ruadh mun chòmhradh seo. Chuir am muillear a' cheist air Fearchar, 'An ainmich thu dhomh, Fhearchair, àite sam bith far nach eil Dia?'*

*'Chan eil Dia ann an cridhe an duine neo-iompaichte,' fhreagair Fearchar.*

*Turas eile, bha Fearchar ann am mansa. Dh'fhaighnich am ministear dheth an robh am bàs a' cur eagal air. 'Chan eil, gu dearbh,' arsa Fearchar.*

*'Nach eil càil a' cur eagal ort?' thuirt am ministear.*

*'O tha,' fhreagair Fearchar. 'Tha eagal orm ro sin a th' air taobh eile dhen bhàs!'*

*Ràinig Fearchar taobh eile a' bhàis ann an ochd ceud deug, seasgad 's a h-ochd (1868) ann an Inbhir Nis. Bha e ochdad 's a ceithir. Chaidh a thiodhlacadh ann an Cladh Thom na h-Iùbhraich. Chan eil clach no leac a' comharrachadh uaigh.*