

# **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 853 (which corresponds to Litir 1,157). Ruairidh can be contacted at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*A short while ago, my son Calum and I set up a new website. It's called Sgeulachdan nan Gaisgeach. It's to be found at [gaisgeach.com](http://gaisgeach.com). On the site, there are twenty stories that belong to the oral tradition of the Gaels in Scotland. They are told in modern Gaelic. They are about the Fianna and other heroes.*

*Some of the stories came from the storyteller, George MacPherson from Glendale on the Isle of Skye. I want to tell you a short one just now. Or a shortened version of it, at least. It's called 'The Heroism of Oscar'.*

*Oscar was Fionn mac Cumhail's grandson. He was a disappointment to his grandfather because he wouldn't take part in the sports of the Fianna. He was lazy. He'd go and lie in the shade of a tree when the others were hunting. But the Old Grey Magician ['the grizzled wizard'] said to Fionn, 'Leave him be. He will be the most heroic of the Fianna yet.'*

*Fionn was not too keen on that opinion, but he allowed the lad to be as he was. A day came when Fionn and the Fianna were stuck on the hunting mountain. An enemy force came. They*

O chionn ghoirid, chuir mi fhìn is mo mhac, Calum, làrach-lìn ùr air chois. 'S e an t-ainm a th' oirre *Sgeulachdan nan Gaisgeach*. Tha i ri lorg aig [gaisgeach.com](http://gaisgeach.com). Air an làraich, tha fichead sgeulachd a bhuineas do bheul-aithris nan Gàidheal ann an Alba. Tha iad air an aithris ann an Gàidhlig an latha an-diugh. Tha iad mu dheidhinn nam Fianna agus gaisgich eile.

Thàinig cuid de na sgeulachdan bhon sgeulaiche, Seòras Mac a' Phearsain à Gleann Dail anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Tha mi airson tè ghoirid dhiubh innse dhuibh an-dràsta. No geàrr-chunntas dhith, co-dhiù. 'S e an t-ainm a th' oirre 'Gaisge Oscar'.

B' e Oscar ogha Fhinn mhic Cumhail. Bha e na bhriseadh-dùil do a sheanair oir cha bhiodh e a' gabhail pàirt ann an spòrs nam Fianna. Bha e leisg. Bhiodh e a' falbh a laighe fo sgàil craoibhe nuair a bha càch a' sealg. Ach thuirt am Buidseach Gris-fhionn ri Fionn, 'Leig leis. Bidh e na fhear as gaisgeile de na Fianna fhathast.'

Cha robh Fionn ro dhèidheil air a' bheachd sin, ach leig e leis a' ghille a bhith mar a bha e. Thàinig latha nuair a bha Fionn agus na Fianna glacte air a' bheinn-sheilg. Thàinig feachd de nàimhdean. Thug iad

*attacked the Fianna. The Fianna were in dire straits.*

*Oscar had gone to sleep under a tree. But he heard the shouting of the Fianna and the noise of fighting. He awoke, he jumped to his feet, and he looked around him. He saw his grandfather, Fionn, and the Fianna. They were under pressure. Oscar did not have a weapon. Despite that, however, he ran towards the battlefield.*

*He ran past a large oak tree. He pulled the tree from the ground. He ran behind Fionn's enemies. He laid about them with the tree, and he killed many of them. The enemies turned on their heels and they fled before Oscar. That's how Oscar won a reputation for himself as the most heroic member of the Fianna. On many occasions after that, he would prove his heroism.*

ionnsaigh air na Fianna. Bha na Fianna ann an èiginn.

Bha Oscar air a dhol a chadal fo chraobh. Ach chuala e èigheachd nam Fianna agus fuaim sabaid. Dhùisg e, leum e gu a chasan, agus choimhead e timcheall air. Chunnaic e a sheanair, Fionn, agus na Fianna. Bha iad fo ìmpidh. Cha robh ball-airm aig Oscar. A dh'aindeoin sin, ge-tà, ruith e a dh'ionnsaigh blàr a' chatha.

Ruith e seachad air craobh-dharaich mhòr. Spìon e a' chraobh bhon talamh. Ruith e air cùl nàimhdean Fhinn. Ghabh e dhaibh leis a' chraoibh, agus mharbh e mòran dhiubh. Thionndaidh na nàimhdean air an sàilean agus theich iad ro Oscar. 'S ann mar sin a choisinn Oscar cliù dha fhèin mar am ball a bu ghaisgeile de na Fianna. 'S iomadh turas an dèidh sin a bhiodh e a' dearbhadh a ghaisge.