

# **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 861 (which corresponds to Litir 1,165). Ruairidh can be contacted at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*I was telling you about Fearchar Lighiche. The gentleman returned. He took the lid from the pot. He put a finger in and put it in his mouth. 'Oh dear,' he said, 'this broth is useless. You did not do what I asked of you.' He knew that Fearchar had put his own finger in, getting all the goodness in the pot.*

*Fearchar did not get the reward for handing over the white snake. But he got another reward. He was able to cure any disease.*

*On the way home to the Mackay Country, Fearchar met some people who were sick. He cured them all. He reached a town where there was a King. The King was suffering from a sore foot. There were ulcers on it. The King was not able to walk. He was in constant pain. His physicians were not able to find a cure for him.*

*Fearchar went to the castle door. He shouted, 'The black creature on the white bone.'*

*'Who is that?' asked the King.*

*'A man who says he is a physician,' said an officer.*

*'Bring him to me,' said the King.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Fhearchar Lighiche. Thill an duin-usal. Thog e an ceann far na poite. Chuir e corrag a-steach agus chuir e na bheul i. 'Obh obh,' ars esan, 'chan eil feum sam bith sa bhrot. Cha do rinn thu na dh'iarr mi ort.' Bha fios aige gun robh Fearchar air a chorrach fhèin a chur a-steach, a' faighinn a h-uile maitheas sa phoit.

Cha d' fhuair Fearchar an duais airson an nathair gheal a thoirt seachad. Ach bha duais eile aige. Bha e comasach air tinneas sam bith a leigheas.

Air an rathad dhachaigh a Dhùthaich MhicAoidh, thachair Fearchar ri feadhainn a bha tinn. Rinn e leigheas orra uile. Ràinig e baile far an robh Rìgh. Bha an Rìgh a' fulang le cas ghoirt. Bha neasgaidean oirre. Cha robh comas coiseachd aig an Rìgh. Bha e ann am pian fad na h-ùine. Cha robh na lighichean aige air leigheas a lorg dha.

Chaidh Fearchar gu doras a' chaisteil. Dh'èigh e, 'A' bhiast-dubh air a' chnàmh gheal.'

'Cò tha sin?' dh'fhaighnich an Rìgh.

'Fear a tha ag ràdh gur e lighiche a tha ann,' thuirt oifigear.

'Thoir thugam e,' ars an Rìgh.

*'Are you a physician?' he asked of Fearchar.*

*'Yes,' said Fearchar.*

*'If you cure me so that I am no longer in pain,' said the King, 'I shall give you any reward you wish, even the half of my kingdom.'*

*Fearchar examined the King's foot. The other physicians had kept the ulcers open. They had put beetles on them. The beetles were eating the flesh. Fearchar got rid of the beetles. He put a poultice on the foot. It improved.*

*The King was grateful. 'What reward do you wish?' he asked.*

*'Every island between the Point of Stoer in Assynt and the Red Point in Orkney,' said Fearchar.*

*'You'll have them,' said the King, 'and land in addition.'*

*Fearchar was now a major landlord. And those lands were in the hands of his descendants for many a year.*

*'An e lighiche a th' annad?' dh'fhaighnich e de dh'Fhearchar.*

*'S e,' thuir Fhearchar.*

*'Ma nì thu leigheas orm gus nach bi mi ann am pian tuilleadh,' ars an Rìgh, 'bheir mi dhut duais sam bith a dh'iarras tu, eadhon an dàrna cuid dhen rìoghachd agam.'*

*Thug Fhearchar sùil air cas an Rìgh. Bha na lighichean eile air na neasgaidean a chumail fosgailte. Bha iad air daolagan a chur orra. Bha na daolagan ag ithe na feòla. Fhuair Fhearchar cuidhteas na daolagan. Chuir e fuar-lite air a' chois. Thàinig feabhas oirre.*

*Bha an Rìgh taingeil. 'Dè an duais a tha thu ag iarraidh?' dh'fhaighnich e.*

*'A h-uile eilean eadar Rubha an Stòir ann an Asainte agus an Rubha Dearg ann an Arcaibh,' thuir Fhearchar.*

*'Bidh iad sin agad,' ars an Rìgh, 'agus fearann a bharrachd.'*

*Bha Fhearchar an uair sin na uachdaran mòr. Agus bha na dùthchannan sin ann an làmhan a shliochd fad iomadach bliadhna.*