

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 907 (which corresponds to Litir 1,211). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I'm continuing with the story 'The Shawbost Freebooter'. Ishbel and Peggy Morrison were beside Loch Athabhat Mòr. Ishbel saw a beautiful butterfly on a water-lily. With a walking stick, she tried to pull the plant to shore. But she fell into the water that was dark and deep. She disappeared below [the water].

Peggy started to scream. Ishbel was on the point of drowning when Peggy heard a sound. A man came past her and jumped into the water.

He swam under the water and found Ishbel. He took her to shore. Ishbel said to him, 'Sir, you saved my life. What reward shall I give you?'

'It was nothing,' he replied. 'My reward is that I saved somebody's life.'

'My home is in Bragar,' said Ishbel. She was finding the man extremely attractive. 'I am the daughter of the clan chief of the Morrisons. Come home with me. My father will be pleased to meet you.'

The stranger refused to go. He walked part of the way with the other two. Then he stopped. He said he had to leave. While they were there, a

Tha mi a' leantainn leis an sgeul 'Ceatharnach Shiaboist'. Bha Iseabail agus Peigi Mhoireasdan ri taobh Loch Athabhat Mòr. Chunnaic Iseabail dealan-dè brèagha air duilleag-bhàite bhàn. Le bata-coiseachd, dh'fheuch i ris an lus a tharraing gu tìr. Ach thuit i don uisge a bha dubh agus domhainn. Dh'fhalbh i fodha.

Thòisich Peigi air sgreuchail. Bha Iseabail an impis bàthadh nuair a chuala Peigi fuaim. Thàinig fear seachad oirre agus leum e don uisge.

Shnàmh e fodha agus lorg e Iseabail. Thug e don chladach i. Thuirt Iseabail ris, 'A mhaighstir, shàbhail sibh mo bheatha. Dè an duais a bheir mi dhuibh?'

'Ist,' fhreagair e. 'S e mo dhuais gun do shàbhail mi beatha cuideigin.'

'Tha mo dhachaigh ann am Bràgar,' ars Iseabail. Bha i a' faighinn an duine air leth tarraingeach. 'Is mise nighean ceann-cinnidh nam Moireasdanach. Thigibh dhachaigh cuideirim. Bidh m' athair toilichte coinneachadh ribh.'

Dhiùlt an coigreach a dhol ann. Choisich e pàirt dhen rathad còmhla ris an dithis eile. An uair sin stad e. Thuirt e gu feumadh e falbh. Fhad 's a bha iad an sin,

raven came close to them. That was a sign of bad news. Death, even.

When she reached her house, Ishbel reported what had happened to her. Her brother, Alasdair, knew that it was the freebooter from Beinn Mhòr that had saved her. But he said nothing.

About that time, some in the community were complaining about the loss of food. A thief was breaking into their houses at night. He was stealing food. People reckoned that the thief was living on Beinn Mhòr. Alasdair was put in charge of a [military] force. Their aim was to find the man.

The force went past the mountain. They climbed to the summit from the south. Near the summit, Alasdair fell deliberately. His sword made a noise when it hit a rock. That was a warning to the man who had saved his sister. And we'll see what happened next week.

thàinig fitheach faisg orra. Bha sin na chomharra de dhroch naidheachd. Bàs eadhon.

Nuair a ràinig i an taigh aice, dh'inns Iseabail mar a thachair dhi. Bha fios aig a bràthair, Alasdair, gur e an ceatharnach às a' Bheinn Mhòir a shàbhail i. Ach cha tuirt e guth.

Mun àm sin, bha cuid anns a' choimhearsnachd a' gearan mu chall bìdh. Bha mèirleach a' briseadh a-steach do na taighean aca air an oidhche. Bha e a' goid biadh. Bha daoine dhen bheachd gun robh am mèirleach a' fuireach air a' Bheinn Mhòir. Chaidh Alasdair a chur os cionn feachd. B' e an t-amas aca an duine a lorg.

Chaidh am feachd seachad air a' bheinn. Shreap iad don mhullach bhon taobh dheas. Faisg air a' mhullach, thuit Alasdair a dh'aona-ghnothach. Rinn a chlaidheamh fuaim nuair a bhuail e ann an creag. Bha sin mar rabhadh don fhear a shàbhail a phiuthar. Agus chì sinn dè thachair an-ath-sheachdain.