

## **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 908 (which corresponds to Litir 1,212). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).

*'The Shawbost Freebooter' heard Alasdair Morrison's sword hitting a rock. That was a warning to him. He fled. When the people got sight of him, he was at the base of the hill. He was running towards the sea.*

*The people caught him on a beach near Shawbost. When nobody else was in earshot, Alasdair told him that his family was grateful to him for saving his sister's life. They reached Ruairidh Dearg's house. Ishbel Morrison was there, along with her father.*

*'Oh, father,' she said, 'yonder's the man who saved me. You mustn't hang him.' She was in love with him.*

*'I'll do my duty, Ishbel,' he replied. It will be according to whether he is guilty or not guilty.' But some people from the village were searching the bothy at the summit of Beinn Mhòr. They found plenty of evidence that he was the thief.*

*Thus, Ishbel's father could do nothing to save the young man. He was found guilty. He was put to death on 'the hanging hill'.*

*The people didn't find out who he was or even his name, except that he*

Chuala 'Ceatharnach Shiaboist' claidheamh Alasdair Mhoireasdain a' bualadh ann an creag. Bha sin mar rabhadh dha. Theich e. Nuair a fhuair na daoine sealladh air, bha e aig bonn na beinne. Bha e a' ruith a dh'ionnsaigh na mara.

Ghlac na daoine e air tràigh faisg air Siabost. Nuair nach robh duine eile san èisteachd, dh'inns Alasdair dha gun robh a theaghlach taingeil dha airson beatha a pheathar a shàbhaladh. Ràinig iad taigh Ruairidh Dheirg. Bha Iseabail Mhoireasdan an sin, cuide ri a h-athair.

'O, athair,' thuirt i, 'siud am fear a shàbhail mi. Chan fhaod sibh a chrochadh.' Bha i ann an gaol leis.

'Nì mi mo dhleastanas, Iseabail,' fhreagair esan. 'Bidh e a rèir co-dhiù tha e ciontach no neoichiontach.' Ach bha feadhainn bhon bhaile a' rannsachadh a' bhothain air mullach na Beinne Mòire. Lorg iad fianais gu leòr gum b' esan am mèirleach.

Mar sin, cha b' urrainn do dh'athair Iseabail càil a dhèanamh airson am fear òg a shàbhaladh. Chaidh fhaighinn ciontach. Chaidh a chur gu bàs air Cnoc a' Chrochaidh.

Cha d' fhuair na daoine a-mach cò bha ann no eadhon an t-ainm a bha air, ach

*belonged to the MacLeods. He was buried in a green hollow at the bottom of the hanging hill. The storyteller, Norman Morrison, wrote that people were still familiar with the hollow a hundred years ago.*

*Ishbel Morrison sickened. She didn't improve. Within six months she was dead. On the day before she died, she sent for her brother, Alasdair. She told him that she wouldn't live for long.*

*'I shall be buried in the Bragar cemetery,' she said. 'But on the second night after the burial, I want you and Hugh MacAulay to lift my coffin from the grave. I want you to rebury it in the grave of the man who saved me. But you must keep this a secret from our parents.*

*And that's what happened. Ishbel and the nameless man who saved her were laid together in the same grave.*

gum buineadh e do na Leòdaich. Chaidh a thiodhlacadh ann an glac ghorm aig bonn Cnoc a' Chrochaidh. Sgrìobh an sgeulaiche, Tormod an t-Seòladair, gun robh daoine ag aithneachadh na glaise fhathast o chionn ceud bliadhna.

Dh'fhàs Iseabail Mhoireasdan tinn. Cha tàinig feabhas oirre. Taobh a-staigh sia mìosan bha i marbh. An latha mus do chaochail i, chuir i fios air a bràthair, Alasdair. Dh'inns i dha nach biodh i beò fada.

'Bidh mi air mo thiodhlacadh ann an Cladh Bhràgair,' thuirt i. 'Ach air an dàrna oidhche an dèidh an tiodhlacaidh, tha mi airson 's gun tog thu fhèin is Ùisdean MacAmhlaigh mo chiste às an uaigh. Tha mi airson 's gun ath-thiodhlaic sibh i anns an uaigh aig an fhear a shàbhail mi. Ach feumaidh sibh seo a chumail dìomhair bho ar pàrantan.'

Agus 's e sin a thachair. Chaidh Iseabail agus an duine gun ainm a shàbhail i a shìneadh còmhla anns an aon uaigh.