

## **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 980 (which corresponds to Litir 1,284). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).

*I was telling you about Angus and Bride in 'Wonder Tales from Scottish Myth and Legend' by Donald Alexander Mackenzie. Angus was a son of the Cailleach Bheur, queen of the winter. He was living all winter long in the Green Isle of the West where nobody grows old.*

*Angus initially saw Bride in a dream. He spoke to the King of the Green Isle about her. 'I must go and find her just now,' said Angus.*

*'It is the wolf-month (mid Jan to mid Feb),' replied the King. 'It's not appropriate.'*

*'I'll put a spell on the sea and on the land,' said Angus. 'I'll take three borrowing days from Lammas (August) to the wolf-month.' He did that and they had three beautiful days. But he did not find Bride. He went home.*

*When the spring flowers had appeared, Angus tried again. This time, he found Bride in the castle where she was kept captive. 'I came to free you,' he said.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Aonghas agus Brìde ann am *Wonder Tales from Scottish Myth and Legend* le Dòmhnall Alasdair MacCoinnich. B' e Aonghas mac na Caillich Bheura, Banrigh a' Gheamhraidh. Bha e a' fuireach fad a' gheamhraidh ann an Eilean Uaine an Iar far nach tig seann aois air duine.

Chunnaic Aonghas Brìde ann an aisling an toiseach. Bhruidhinn e ri Rìgh an Eilein Uaine mu a deidhinn. 'Feumaidh mi dhol ga lorg an-dràsta,' ars Aonghas.

'Tha am Faoilleach ann,' fhreagair an Rìgh. 'Chan eil e iomchaidh.'

'Cuiridh mi geas air a' mhuir agus air an tìr,' thuirt Aonghas. 'Bheir mi trì latha iasaid bhon Lùnastal don Fhaoilleach.' Rinn e sin agus bha trì latha àlainn aca. Ach cha do lorg e Brìde. Thill e dhachaigh.

Nuair a bha flùraichean an earraich air nochdadh, dh'fheuch Aonghas a-rithist. An turas seo, lorg e Brìde anns a' chaisteal far an robh i am bràighdeanas. 'Thàinig mi airson do shaoradh,' thuirt e.

*'From here on, people will remember this day as Bride's day,' said Angus. She was very pleased.*

*Fairies came to welcome Bride. The linnet 'Bride's little bird' was the first bird to welcome her. And, on the shore, the oystercatcher 'Bride's bird' or 'Bride's servant' welcomed her.*

*Angus and Bride married in the Fairy Queen's palace. The Cailleach Bheura was not pleased. When she saw the grass growing, she was furious.*

*She had a black horse. She jumped on the horse's back and tried to find Angus. But Angus and Bride fled.*

*The Cailleach created damaging winds. To begin with, there was 'the whistler'. It was accompanied by hailstones. Sheep and lambs were killed by the cold.*

*Then there was the 'sharp-billed wind'. It was like a bird's beak, pecking everything. It lasted nine days. Then there was 'the sweeper'. That wind ripped branches from the trees. But did the Cailleach Bheura win? We'll see when I conclude these stories next week.*

*'Bho seo a-mach, bidh daoine a' cuimhneachadh an latha seo mar Latha Bhrìde,' ars Aonghas. Bha i fhèin gu math toilichte.*

*Thàinig sìthichean airson fàilte a chur air Bhrìde. B' e am bigean-Bhrìde a' chiad eun a chuir fàilte oirre. Agus, air a' chladach, chuir am Bhrìdean no Gille-Bhrìde fàilte oirre.*

*Phòs Aonghas agus Bhrìde ann an lùchairt Banrigh nan Sìthichean. Cha robh a' Chailleach Bheura toilichte. Nuair a chunnaic i am feur a' fàs bha an cuthach oirre.*

*Bha each dubh aice. Leum i air muin an eich agus dh'fheuch i ri Aonghas a lorg. Ach theich Aonghas agus Bhrìde.*

*Chruthaich a' Chailleach gaohan cronail. An toiseach bha an Fheadag. Bha clachan-meallain na cois. Mhair i trì latha. Chaidh caoraich agus uain a mharbhadh leis an fhuachd.*

*An uair sin, bha a' Ghobag. Bha i mar ghob eòin, a' gobachadh air a h-uile rud. Mhair i naoi latha. An uair sin, bha an Sguabag ann. Reub a' ghaoth sin geugan far nan craobh. Ach an do bhuannaich a' Chailleach Bheura? Chì sinn nuair a chuireas mi crìoch air na stòiridhean seo an-ath-sheachdain.*