

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 195 (which corresponds to Litir 499). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Here's a wee story. It happened in the 19th Century. I don't know where. Perhaps in Perthshire. Somewhere on the mainland anyway. The story is called Farquhar Ban's dog.

Farquhar Ban had a good dog. It was a sheepdog. Its name was Fraoch. There was no other dog in the glen as good as Fraoch. It had a long tail. It had a good appearance. And it was very skilful with [the] sheep.

But Fraoch wasn't perfect. When the shepherds were together for shearing, with dogs, Fraoch was fighting with the dogs. Farquhar wasn't happy with it at all when that happened.

One evening, at shearing time, John Roy and his wife were walking in the glen. They were near Farquhar's house. They were on the road home from the Lowlands. It was pitch black. They heard an unusual sound.

"What is that sound, John?" said the wife.

"The deer among the stones," John replied.

"It's certainly not," said his

Seo agaibh stòiridh beag. Thachair e anns an naoidheamh linn deug. Chan eil fios agam càite. 'S dòcha ann an Siorrachd Pheairt. Ann am badeigin air tìr-mòr co-dhiù. 'S e an t-ainm a tha air an stòiridh Cù Fhearchair Bhàin.

Bha cù math aig Fearchair Bàn. 'S e cù-chaorach a bha ann. 'S e Fraoch an t-ainm a bha air. Cha robh cù eile anns a' ghleann cho math ri Fraoch. Bha earball fada air. Bha deagh choltas air. Agus bha e uabhasach sgileil leis na caoraich.

Ach cha robh Fraoch foirfe. Nuair a bha cìobairean còmhla airson rùsgadh, agus coin aca, bha Fraoch a' sabaid leis na coin. Cha robh Fearchair toilichte leis idir nuair a thachair sin.

Oidhche a bha seo, aig àm an rùsgaidh, bha Iain Ruadh agus a bhean a' coiseachd anns a' ghleann. Bha iad faisg air taigh Fhearchair. Bha iad air an rathad dhachaigh bhon Ghalltachd. Bha e dubh dorch. Chuala iad fuaim annasach.

"Dè am fuaim a tha sin, Iain?" thuirt a' bhean.

"Na fèidh am measg nan clach," fhreagair Iain.

"Chan e, no fèidh," thuirt a

wife. *"You're still drunk."*

"Sheep among the stones, then," said her husband.

"Certainly not sheep," replied his wife. "You're still drunk."

A new noise came out of the darkness. Like the clinking of metal.

"Oh God," cried the wife, "it's the Evil One himself!"

John was sobering up. They thought that Satan himself was coming for them. They were frightened.

John Roy and his wife fled. They ran to the nearest house. That was Farquhar's house. Farquhar was in. But where was Fraoch? He wasn't in. I'll tell you about Fraoch when the story continues next week.

bhean. "Tha uisge-beatha nad cheann fhathast."

"Caoraich am measg nan clach, ma-thà," thuirt an duine aice.

"Chan e, no caoraich," fhreagair a bhean. "Tha uisge-beatha nad cheann fhathast."

Thàinig fuaim às ùr a-mach às an dorchadas. Mar ghliongadh meatailt.

"A Dhia," dh'èigh a' bhean, "'s e am Fear as Miosa fhèin a tha ann!"

Bha Iain a' fàs sòbarra. Bha iad dhen bheachd gun robh an Sàtan fhèin a' dèanamh orra! Bha an t-eagal orra.

Theich Iain Ruadh 's a' bhean aige. Ruith iad don taigh a b' fhaisge. B' e sin taigh Fhearchair. Bha Fearchar a-staigh. Ach càite an robh Fraoch? Cha robh esan a-staigh. Innsidh mi dhuibh mu Fhraoch nuair a leanas an stòiridh an ath sheachdain.