

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 196 (which corresponds to Litir 500). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you last week about the sheepdog Fraoch and his master, Farquhar Ban. John Roy and his wife were out at night. They heard a frightful sound. They ran to the nearest house – Farquhar Ban's house. Farquhar was in, but Fraoch was not.

Farquhar was listening to John's wife. She was telling him about the noise. They heard a dog whimpering at the door. Who was there but Fraoch.

Fraoch [had] lost much of his tail. He only had half a tail. What had happened?

"He was in the hands of the Evil One," said the woman.

"No," replied Farquhar. Why did he say that? There was no smell of burning from [on] Fraoch at all. The affair was strange.

On the next day, John and his wife went hom. Fraoch was outside. There was a red cloth tied to his tail. At least, there was a red cloth tied to what was left of his tail. Farquhar found out what happened.

Fraoch was out that night. Shepherds and their dogs were

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh mun chù-chaorach Fraoch agus a mhaighstir, Fearchar Bàn. Bha Iain Ruadh agus a bhean a-muigh air an oidhche. Chuala iad fuaim eagallach. Ruith iad don taigh a b' fhaisge – taigh Fhearchair Bhàin. Bha Fearchar a-staigh, ach cha robh Fraoch.

Bha Fearchar ag èisteachd ri bean Iain. Bha i ag innse dha mun fhuaim. Chuala iad cù a' dèanamh sgiùgan aig an doras. Cò bha ann ach Fraoch.

Chaill Fraoch mòran de earball. Bha dìreach leth-earbaill aige. Dè bha air tachairt?

"Bha e ann an làmhan an Fhir as Miosa," thuirt am boireannach.

"Cha robh," fhreagair Fearchar. Carson a thuirt e sin? Cha robh fàileadh losgaidh air Fraoch idir. Bha an gnothach annasach.

Air an làrna-mhàireach, dh'fhalbh Iain is a bhean dhachaigh. Bha Fraoch a-muigh. Bha clobhd dearg air a cheangal ri earball. No bha clobhd dearg air a cheangal ris na bha air fhàgail de earball. Fhuair Fearchar a-mach dè a thachair.

Bha Fraoch a-muigh an oidhche a bha sin. Bha cìobairean agus an coin

together. *Fraoch appeared. Fraoch started to fight with another dog. A great fight arose involving all the dogs. One of the shepherds was unhappy with Fraoch. As punishment, he tied a kettle to Fraoch's tail. He kicked the dog. He told him to go home.*

Fraoch was on the way home. It was dark. John Roy and his wife heard him. Fraoch was making a noise with the kettle tied to his tail. A frightful noise. Finally, he got the kettle stuck between two stones. Fraoch couldn't move. He made a great effort. A bit of his tail came off, with the kettle still tied to it. He appeared at Farquhar Ban's house, with just half a tail.

Well, till the last day of his life, Farquhar was angry about the matter. And the man who tied the kettle to Fraoch's tail...? He left. He never ever returned to the glen.

ann còmhla. Nochd Fraoch. Thòisich Fraoch air sabaid le cù eile. Dh'èirich sabaid mhòr eadar na coin gu lèir. Bha fear de na còbaircean mì-thoilichte le Fraoch. Mar pheanas, cheangail e coire ri earball Fhraoich. Bhreab e an cù. Dh'iarr e air falbh dhachaigh.

Bha Fraoch air an rathad dhach-aigh. Bha e dorch. Chuala Iain Ruadh 's a bhean e. Bha Fraoch a' dèanamh fuaim leis a' choire ceangailte ri earball. Fuaim a bha eagallach. Mu dheireadh, fhuair e an coire an sàs eadar dà chloich. Cha b' urrainn do Fhraoch ghluasad. Rinn e spàirn mhòr. Thàinig pìos de earball dheth, agus an coire fhathast ceangailte ris. Nochd e aig taigh Fhearchair Bhàin, le dìreach leth-earbaill.

Uill, chun an latha mu dheireadh de a bheatha, bha Fearchar feargach mu dheidhinn a' ghnothaich. Agus am fear a cheangail an coire ri earball Fhraoich...? Dh'fhalbh e. Cha do thill e don ghleann a-chaidh tuilleadh.