

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 435 (which corresponds to Litir 739). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about the priest from Pabay. He was on Skye. He was resting in a clearing in the forest. He had a valuable staff. He put the staff next to him. Fairies came.

'Who are you?' said the priest.

'Fairies,' replied the leader. 'We want you to pray for us. We want God's blessing.'

'Pray for you?!' said the priest. 'I'll never do that. For major sinners like you, there is no forgiveness.'

A little old woman came forward. 'There is joy in Heaven,' she said, 'about one sinner who repents.'

Those words upset the priest. But, still, he believed that the fairies belonged in Hell. 'You won't get forgiveness,' he said. 'I'd sooner my staff became a tree again than that you would receive God's forgiveness.'

The fairies left. Despite what he [had] said, the priest had doubt in his mind. He left. But he forgot to take his staff with him. He heard the wailing of the fairies. The noise

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun t-sagart à Pabaigh. Bha e anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Bha e a' gabhail fois ann an innis anns a' choille. Bha bachall prìseil aige. Chuir e am bachall ri a thaobh. Thàinig sìthichean.

'Cò sibh?' thuir an sagart.

'Sìthichean,' fhreagair an ceannard. 'Tha sinn ag iarraidh oirbh ùrnaigh a dhèanamh air ar son. Tha sinn ag iarraidh beannachadh Dhè.'

'Ùrnaigh a dhèanamh air ur son?!' thuir an sagart. 'Cha dèan mi sin a-chaoidh. Do pheacaich mhòra mar a tha sibhse, chan eil mathanas ann.'

Thàinig cailleach bheag air adhart. 'Tha aoibhneas ann an Nèamh,' thuir i, 'mu aon pheacach a tha a' gabhail aithreachas.'

Chuir na faclan sin dragh air an t-sagart. Ach, fhathast, bha e a' creidsinn gur ann a dh'Ifrinn a bhuineadh na sìthichean. 'Chan fhaigh sibh mathanas,' thuir e. 'B' fheàrr leam gum biodh mo bhachall na chraoibh a-rithist seach gum faigheadh sibhse mathanas Dhè.'

Dh'fhalbh na sìthichean. A dh'aindeoin na thuir e, bha teagamh ann an inntinn an t-sagairt. Dh'fhalbh e. Ach dh'òchuimhnich e a bhachall a thoirt leis. Chuala e caoineadh nan

was throughout the forest.

The priest reached a hut belonging to a family. He baptised their new baby. He remembered the staff. He left the house, and he returned to the clearing in the forest. Where he [had] left his staff, there was a great ash tree.

The priest prayed. He was regretful about what he [had] said to the fairies. He called on the little people. But they did not return. He moved through the forest. He heard the wailing of the fairies. But they didn't come close to him.

The priest returned to Pabay. He got permission to go and live in the forest. He gave sermons day and night to anybody who would listen to him. And to animals and birds and trees. His lesson was 'God's forgiveness'. Little by little, the wailing in the forest ceased. But the priest never again saw the little people.

sìthichean. Bha am fuaim air feadh na coille.

Ràinig an sagart bothan aig teaghlach. Bhaistich e an leanabh ùr aca. Chuimhnich e a bhachall. Dh'fhàg e an taigh, agus thill e don innis anns a' choille. Far an do dh'fhàg e a bhachall, bha craobh-uinnsinn mhòr ann.

Rinn an sagart ùrnaigh. Bha e a' gabhail aithreachas mu na thuirte ris na sìthichean. Ghairm e air na daoine beaga. Ach cha do thill iad. Ghluais e tron choille. Chuala e caoineadh nan sìthichean. Ach cha tàinig iad faisg air.

Thill an sagart a Phabaigh. Fhuair e cead a dhol a dh'fhuireach anns a' choille. Rinn e searmonan a latha 's a dh'oidhche do dhuine sam bith a bhiodh ag èisteachd ris. Agus do dh'ainmhidhean is eòin is craobhan. B' e an ceann-teagaisg aige 'mathanas Dhè'. Mean air mhean sguir an caoineadh sa choille. Ach chan fhaca an sagart na daoine beaga tuilleadh.