

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 455 (which corresponds to Litir 759). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about the time St Columba sharpened a stake from the wood for the beggar from Lochaber. The poor Lochaber man was using the stake to catch wild animals.

The man's wife said to him that she was worried about the stake he was leaving in the wood each night. 'Pull it out of the ground,' she said. 'If a man or cattle should be killed by it, you, me and the children will be put to death or put in captivity.

Her husband replied to her, 'That's not how it will be. When Columba blessed the stake, he said it wouldn't harm men or cattle.' But the man did what his wife asked of him. He pulled the stake out of the ground, although he was very sad about it.

He took the sharpened stake into the house. He propped it against the wall. Shortly after that, the house dog fell on the point. It was killed. His wife said to him, 'The stake is a danger to the children.'

The poor man took the stake out of the house. He went to the wood. He found a bush. He hid the stake in the bush. He did not expect it to harm man or beast.

But he returned the next morning. A roe deer had fallen on the

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun turas a bhioraich Calum Cille slat às a' choille don dèirceach Abrach. Bha an t-Abrach bochd a' cleachdadh na slaite mar stob airson fiadh-bheatha a ghlacadh.

Thuir bean an duine ris gun robh dragh oirre mun stob a bha e a' fàgail anns a' choille gach oidhche. 'Spìon às an talamh e,' thuir i. 'Ma gheibh duine no crodh bàs air, thèid thu fhèin, 's mi fhìn 's ar clann a chur gu bàs no a chur ann am braighdeanas.'

Fhreagair an duine aice, 'Chan ann mar sin a bhitheas e. Nuair a bheannaich Calum Cille an t-slat, thuir e nach dèanadh i cron air daoine no crodh.' Ach rinn an duine na dh'iarr a bhean air. Spìon e an stob a-mach às an talamh, ged a bha e muladach mu dheidhinn.

Thug e an t-slat bhiorach a-steach don taigh. Chuir e an taic a' bhalla i. Goirid às dèidh sin, thuit an cù-taighe air a' bhior. Chaidh a mharbhadh. Thuir a bhean ris, 'Tha an t-slat na cunnart don chloinn.'

Thug am fear bochd an t-slat a-mach às an taigh. Chaidh e don choille. Lorg e preas. Chuir e an t-slat am falach anns a' phreas. Bha e an dùil nach dèanadh i cron air duine no beathach.

Ach thill e madainn an làrna-mhàireach. Bha earba air tuiteam air a'

point. The poor man took the stake away. He put it under the water at the edge of a river. He was certain it wouldn't harm anything there.

But he returned next day. And what was caught on the point of the stake but a large salmon. The poor man took the stake home. He put it outside on the roof of the house. And a crow fell on the point.

The man was very upset. He got advice from his wife to break the stake into little pieces. And that's what he did. He threw the pieces into the fire. And, for the rest of his life, he and his family were bewailing the loss of the stake that Columba gave to him, for they never again had venison.

bhior. Thug an duine bochd an t-slat air falbh. Chuir e fon uisge i aig oir aibhne. Bha e deimhinne nach dèanadh i cron air dad an sin.

Ach thill e an làrna-mhàireach. Agus dè bha glacte air bior na slaite ach bradan mòr. Thug am fear bochd an t-slat dhachaigh. Chuir e a-muigh i air mullach an taighe. Agus thuit feannag air a' bhior.

Bha an duine troimh-chèile. Fhuair e comhairle bho a bhean an t-slat a dhèanamh na spealgan. Agus 's e sin a rinn e. Thilg e na spealgan don teine. Ach airson a' chòrr de a bheatha, bha e fhèin agus a theaghlach a' caoidh call na slaite a thug Calum Cille dha, oir cha robh sitheann aca tuilleadh.