

## **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 483 (which corresponds to Litir 787). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk).

*In some place in the Highlands there is the Wonderful Land. Everyone belongs to the same clan – the Wonderful Clan. It's one of them – Big Gòrach MacIongantach – that left us this history. There were two brothers with the same given [baptism] name. Big Gòrach was three years older than Wee Gòrach.*

*In the Wonderful Land the people were of a normal size. But everything else was bigger than normal. Amazingly big.*

*The plants were as big as trees. When the dandelion was in flower, it was like a yellow forest. When it rained, the people were getting shelter under the leaves of the rhubarb.*

*The people were keen on Brussels sprouts. But the sprouts were so high above the ground that they were hard to harvest. Fortunately, Wee Gòrach had been in India. He learned to climb [the] palm trees to get coconuts. And he was harvesting the Brussels sprouts in the same way. He was carrying a large knife in his mouth. The clan had a Brussels sprout as their emblem. And the Iongantach clan's nickname was 'the children of the*

Ann am badeigin air a' Ghàidhealtachd tha An Dùthaich Iongantach. Buinidh a h-uile duine don aon chinneadh – A' Chlann Iongantach. 'S e fear dhiubh – Gòrach Mòr MacIongantach – a dh'fhàg an eachdraidh seo againn. Bha dithis bhràithrean air an robh an t-aon ainm-baistidh. Bha Gòrach Mòr trì bliadhna na bu shine na Gòrach Beag.

Ann an Dùthaich Iongantaich bha na daoine dhen mheud àbhaisteach. Ach bha a h-uile càil eile na bu mhotha na 'n àbhaist. Iongantach mòr.

Bha na lusannan cho mòr ri craobhan. Nuair a bha am beàrnan-brìde fo bhlàth bha e coltach ri coille bhuidhe. Nuair a bha an t-uisge ann, bha na daoine a' faighinn fàsadh fo dhuilleagan an rùbraib.

Bha na daoine measail air buinneagan Bruisealach. Ach bha na buinneagan cho àrd os cionn na talmhainn 's gun robh e doirbh am buain. Gu fortanach, bha Gòrach Beag air a bhith anns na h-Innseachan. Dh'ionnsaich e sreap nan craobh pailm airson cnòthan-còco fhaighinn. Agus bha e a' buain nam buinneagan Bruisealach anns an aon dòigh. Bha e a' giùlain sgian mhòr na bheul. Bha buinneag Bhruisealach aig a' chinneadh mar shuaicheantas. Agus 's e 'clann nam

sprouts’.

*In the Wonderful Land, the potatoes were as big as bulls. The trout were as big as basking sharks. And the deer were as big as dinosaurs.*

*Thus, the animals – even the livestock – were a bit dangerous. The people had a simile – ‘as dangerous as the rear-end of a cow’. You’ll understand how that saying came into being. It’s said, one day, that dung fell upon a little old woman without warning. Three days passed before her body was found.*

*The dairy [milk] cattle were so big that the people stopped milking them. But they were milking [the] rabbits and [the] mice.*

*Aye, it was a Wonderful Land, without doubt. And one other thing that was unusual. It was against the law to tell a lie. So we know that what Big Gòrach gave us was the pure [clean] truth. As clean as the mud.*

buinneag’ am frìth-ainm a bha air na h-Iongantaich.

Ann an Dùthaich Iongantaich, bha na buntàta cho mòr ri tairbh. Bha na bric cho mòr ri cearbain. Agus bha na fèidh cho mòr ri dìneasairean.

Mar sin, bha na h-ainmhidhean – eadhon an sprèidh – car cunnartach. Bha samhla aig na daoine – ‘cho cunnartach ri tòn mairt’. Tuigidh sibh mar a dh’èirich an abairt sin. Thathar ag ràdh, latha a bha seo, gun tàinig buachair air cailleach bheag gun fhiosta dhi. Chaidh trì latha seachad mus deach a corp a lorg.

Bha an crodh-bainne cho mòr ’s gun do sguir na daoine o bhith gam bleoghainn. Ach bha iad a’ bleoghainn nan coineanach agus nan luchan.

Aidh, ’s e Dùthaich Iongantach a bha innte, gun teagamh. Agus aon rud eile a bha annasach. Bha e an aghaidh an lagh breug innse. Tha fios againn mar sin gur e an fhìrinn ghlan a thug Gòrach Mòr dhuinn. Cho glan ris an eabar.