

# **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 554 (which corresponds to Litir 858). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*I was telling the old story – The Children of Lear. At the beginning Lear had two children. Their names were Fionnuala and Aodh. They were swimming in a loch when a message came from their father. He asked them to go home.*

*'What is wrong, father?' they asked.*

*'Your mother gave birth to twins,' he replied, 'but she died.' Fionnuala and Aodh had to look after the two new babies – Fiachra and Conn.*

*Lear was lonely. He married his wife's sister – Aoife. She had magic powers. She was evil.*

*One day, the children were swimming. Aoife stood on the bank of the loch. She wore Lear's magic cloak. She opened her cloak and a fireball came out. The fireball hit the water, causing steam. The children lost feeling in their legs and arms. Their shape was changed. They were now beautiful swans.*

*They were going to pass nine hundred years as swans. Three hundred years on Lough Derravaragh, three hundred on The*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh na seann sgeulachd – Clann Lir. Aig an toiseach bha dithis chloinne aig Lear. B' iad an ainmean Fionnuala agus Aodh. Bha iad a' snàmh ann an loch nuair a thàinig teachdaire bhon athair. Dh' iarr e orra a dhol dhachaigh.

'Dè tha ceàrr, athair?' dh' fhaighnich iad.

'Rugadh càraid do ur màthair,' fhreagair e, 'ach chaochail i.' Bha aig Fionnuala agus Aodh ri cùram a thoirt don dithis leanabh ùr – Fiachra agus Conn.

Bha Lear aonaranach. Phòs e piuthar a mhnà – Aoife. Bha cumhachdan draoidheil aice. Bha i olc.

Latha a bha seo, bha a' chlann a' snàmh. Sheas Aoife air bruach an locha. Bha an cleòc draoidheil aig Lear oirre. Dh' fhosgail i a cleòc agus thàinig dreag a-mach. Bhuail an dreag anns an uisge, ag adhbharach deatach. Chaill a' chlann faireachdainn nan casan is gàirdeanan. Thàinig cruth-atharrachadh orra. Bha iad a-nise nan ealachan bòidheach.

Bha iad a' dol a chur seachad naoi ceud bliadhna mar ealachan. Trì cheud bliadhna air Loch Dairbhreach, trì cheud air Sruth na Maoile (eadar

*Straits of Moyle (between Scotland and Ireland) and three hundred on Inis Glora. The charms would end when they heard a bell belonging to the new God. But Aoife left the children one thing – the most beautiful voice ever heard.*

*Lear was looking for the children. Aoife told him that they had been attacked by wild boars. But Fionnuala came. She was in the form of a swan but she still had a voice. She told her father what had happened. Lear was angry and he banished Aoife.*

*When the children were on Lough Derravaragh, Lear was visiting them. But, when three hundred years were past, they left for the Straits of Moyle. Things weren't so easy then. There were often storms.*

*After another three hundred years, they left to the west to Inis Glora. They found a dwelling place on a sea loch. One day, an old man came to the loch. Clann Lir asked him which God he had [ie he worshipped]. And we'll see what he said next week.*

Alba is Èirinn) agus trì cheud air Innis Gluaire. Bhiodh na geasan a' tighinn gu ceann nuair a chluinneadh iad clag aig an Dia ùr. Ach dh'fhàg Aoife aon rud aig a' chloinn – an guth as binne a chualas riamh.

Bha Lear a' coimhead airson na cloinne. Dh'inns Aoife dha gun deach ionnsaigh a thoirt orra le tuirc-nimhe. Ach thàinig Fionnuala. Bha i ann an cruth eala ach bha guth aice fhathast. Dh'inns i do a h-athair mar a thachair. Bha fearg air Lear agus chuir e Aoife air fhògradh.

Nuair a bha a' chlann air Loch Dairbhreach, bha Lear a' tadhal orra. Ach, nuair a bha trì cheud bliadhna seachad, dh'fhalbh iad gu Sruth na Maoile. Cha robh cùisean cho furasta an sin. Bha stoirmean ann gu tric.

An dèidh trì cheud bliadhna eile, dh'fhalbh iad gu siar gu ruige Innis Gluaire. Lorg iad àite-fuirich air loch-mara. Latha a bha seo, thàinig seann duine chun an locha. Dh'fhaighnich Clann Lir dheth dè an Dia a bha aige. Agus chì sinn dè thuirt e an-ath-sheachdain.