

# **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 563 (which corresponds to Litir 867). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*I was telling you the old story from Gairloch – 'MacMillan the Harpist'. MacMillan invited MacDonald to come by Loch Dring in order to see the Fingalians.*

*They went out together. They left the horses in 'the field of the straight bog-channel'. And they continued on themselves a good distance. MacMillan said, 'Are you strong enough in your head for this?' MacDonald replied that he was.*

*MacMillan said, 'put your head down and I'll tie it up.' And he tied his head tightly and securely with a bandage. He took out a whistle. He gave a blast. And what a blast! MacDonald thought that his head had been blasted to smithereens!*

*MacMillan gave another blast. And another until MacDonald's head was nearly shattered. MacMillan asked him to raise his head.*

*MacDonald raised his head and what a view he had! He saw men coming, armed to the teeth. They had hounds. When they were near, he started to feel faint. He fell into a deep sleep. The vision was [had been] so great that he couldn't*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seann stòiridh à Geàrrloch – 'Mac Gille Mhaoil na Cruit'. Thug Mac Gille Mhaoil cuireadh don Dòmhnallach thighinn taobh Locha Dring airson sealladh fhaighinn air an Fhèinn.

Chaidh iad a-mach còmhla. Dh'fhàg iad na h-eich ann an Achadh na Fèithe Dirich. Agus lean iad fhèin orra pìos mòr eile. Thuirt Mac Gille Mhaoil, 'A bheil thu làidir gu leòr nad inntinn airson seo?' Fhreagair an Dòmhnallach gun robh.

Thuirt Mac Gille Mhaoil, 'Leig sìos do cheann agus ceanglaidh mi e.' Agus cheangail e a cheann le bann gu teann, tèarainte. Thug e a-mach feadag. Leig e sgal. B' e sin an sgal! Shaoil an Dòmhnallach gun deach a cheann na mhìrean!

Leig Mac Gille Mhaoil sgal eile. Agus tèile gus an robh ceann an Dòmhnallaich cha mhòr spealgte. Dh'iarr Mac Gille Mhaoil air a cheann a thogail.

Thog an Dòmhnallach a cheann agus 's ann aigesan a bha an sealladh! Chunnaic e daoine a' tighinn fo làn armachd. Bha coin aca. Nuair a bha iad faisg air, thòisich e air fannachadh. Thàinig cadal trom air. Bha an sealladh cho mòr 's nach b' urrainn dha a bhith ga

*endure it.*

*When he awoke, there was nobody there but MacMillan. He was weeping.*

*'Poor man,' said MacMillan, 'it's a pity that you couldn't endure speaking to those men. Because they'll never return.'*

*The two men arose and went home. MacMillan was very upset. 'Oh, poor man,' he said again and again, 'it's a pity that you couldn't endure speaking to those men.'*

*Within a few days, MacMillan died. Before he died, he grew enormous. His head was reaching one end of the stable (where his bed was), and his feet were reaching the other end. He had to be cut into quarters to take him out of the barn and bury him.*

*When the Laird of Gairloch heard about the matter, he gave MacMillan a new noble, honorific name – 'Noble Watercress, son of Fionn'. And that's the story.*

ghiùlan.

Nuair a dhùisg e, cha robh duine ann ach Mac Gille Mhaoil. Bha esan a' gal.

'A dhuine bhochd,' thuir Mac Gille Mhaoil, 'is truagh nach b' urrainn dhut seasamh ri labhairt ris na fir ud. Oir cha till iad tuilleadh.'

Dh'èirich an dithis agus chaidh iad dhachaigh. Bha Mac Gille Mhaoil troimhe-chèile. 'A dhuine bhochd,' thuir e a-rithist 's a-rithist, 'is truagh nach b' urrainn dhut seasamh ri labhairt ris na fir ud.'

Taobh a-staigh beagan làithean, chaochail Mac Gille Mhaoil. Mus d' fhuair e bàs, dh'fhàs e mòr mòr. Bha a cheann a' ruigsinn aon cheann dhen t-sabhal (far an robh a leabaidh), agus bha a chasan a' ruigsinn a' chinn eile. B' fheudar a ghearradh na cheathramhan airson a thoirt a-mach às an t-sabhal agus a thiodhlacadh.

Nuair a chuala Uachdaran Gheàrrloch mun chùis, thug e ainm ùr uasal urramach do Mhac Gille Mhaoil – 'Biolair Uasal mac Fhinn'. Agus 's e sin an stòiridh.