

## **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 591 (which corresponds to Litir 895). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*Ewen 'the son of the goat' and the old woman Effie were in Poolewe. A vessel appeared. Effie asked the captain to take them to Eilean Donan. The captain noticed the boy's scarlet garment and sword. He suspected that he was the son of a king. He took the pair to his clan chief, Big Colin.*

*Colin welcomed them. Ewen was living in his castle. When he was eighteen years of age, Colin said that he would get an opportunity to prove his heroism. They were going to war against another kingdom.*

*On Eilean Donan, Kenneth had married Flora. She told him about her life. She belonged to the gentry but she was an orphan. Her sister had married a king in another kingdom. A baby was born to her. That was Ewen.*

*There was a rebellion. The king was killed. Ewen's mother was made captive. Flora fled with the child. She took the scarlet garment and sword with her. They found the cave by Loch Maree.*

*A harpist came to Eilean Donan. He brought news with him.*

Bha Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair agus an seann bhoireannach Oighrig ann am Poll Iù. Nochd soitheach. Dh'iarr Oighrig air a' chaipitean an toirt a dh'Eilean Donnain. Mhothaich an caipitean don trusgan sgàrlaid is claidheamh aig a' ghille. Bha amharas aige gur e mac rìgh a bha ann. Thug e an dithis don cheann-cinnidh aige, Cailean Mòr.

Chuir Cailean fàilte orra. Bha Eòghann a' fuireach anns a' chaisteal aige. Nuair a bha e ochd bliadhn' deug a dh'aois, thuir Cailean gum faigheadh e cothrom a ghaisgeachd a dhearbhadh. Bha iad a' cur cath air rìoghachd eile.

Ann an Eilean Donnain, bha Coinneach air Fionnghal a phòsadh. Dh'inns i dha mu a beatha. Bhuineadh i do na h-uaislean ach bha i na dilleachdan. Bha a piuthar air rìgh a phòsadh ann an rìoghachd eile. Rugadh leanabh dhi. B' e sin Eòghann.

Bha ar-a-mach ann. Chaidh an rìgh a mharbhadh. Bha màthair Eòghainn air a toirt am bruid. Theich Fionnghal leis an leanabh. Thug i an trusgan sgàrlaid agus claidheamh leatha. Fhuair iad lorg air an uaimh taobh Loch Ma-ruibhe.

Thàinig clàrsair a dh'Eilean Donnain. Thug e naidheachd leis. Bha an

*The kingdom to which Ewen and Flora belonged was now without a king. Flora and Kenneth went there. They helped the old queen to regain her place on the throne.*

*But Big Colin waged war on them. They and the Lord of Castle Donan put together a military force. They routed Big Colin's host. They had Ewen as a prisoner.*

*They were going to kill him. Ewen put on his scarlet garment, and his sword. He was ready to go to his death. He was in front of the queen.*

*'Oh,' said Flora, 'look at his garment and his sword. Is it Ewen?!*

*'What is your name and to whom do you belong?' asked the queen.*

*'I don't know to whom I belong,' replied Ewen, 'but they call me Ewen the son of the goat.'*

*'The son of the goat – it's yourself!' said Flora. 'Don't you see, sister – this is your own son!'*

*But the queen wasn't sure. And I'll bring the story to a conclusion next week.*

rìoghachd dham buineadh Eòghann is Fionnghal a-nise gun rìgh. Chaidh Fionnghal is Coinneach ann. Chuidich iad an t-seann bhanrigh ann a bhith a' faighinn a h-àite air ais air a' chathair rìoghail.

Ach chuir Cailean Mòr cath orra. Chuir iad fhèin is Morair Caisteal Donnain feachd ri chèile. Ruaig iad sluagh Chailein Mhòir. Bha Eòghann aca mar phrìosanach.

Bha iad a' dol ga mharbhadh. Chuir Eòghann a thrusgan sgàrlaid air, agus a chloidheamh. Bha e deiseil airson a dhol gu a bhàs. Bha e air beulaibh na banrigh.

'O,' thuir Fionnghal, 'seall air a thrusgan agus a chloidheamh. An e Eòghann a tha ann?!

'Dè an t-ainm a tha ort agus cò leis thu?' dh'fhaighnich a' bhanrigh.

'Chan eil fhios agam cò leis mi,' fhreagair Eòghann, 'ach 's e Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair a chanas iad rium.'

'Mac a' Ghobhair – 's tu fhèin a tha ann!' thuir Fionnghal. 'Nach eil thu a' faicinn, a phiuthar – seo do mhac fhèin!'

Ach cha robh a' bhanrigh cinnteach. Agus bheir mi an stòiridh gu ceann an-ath-sheachdain.