

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 592 (which corresponds to Litir 896). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Ewen 'the son of the goat' was taken in front of the queen – his mother. Flora recognised him. 'This is your own son!' she said to her sister.

The queen wasn't sure. 'His garment and his sword are like some that my late husband had,' she admitted. 'But I must be sure that this is my son before I grant him the royal throne.'

Kenneth spoke. 'When Ewen was young, and we were on Loch Maree-side,' he said, 'Ewen was playing with my knife. He cut his left arm. If the scar is on this man's arm, we will be sure that he is Ewen the son of the goat.' He looked at the young man. 'Roll up your left sleeve,' he ordered.

Ewen rolled up his sleeve. The scar of the accident was on his arm. The queen rose. She put her arms around her son. Everyone expressed happiness. Ewen was now their king.

Kenneth and Flora came to live in Ewen's kingdom. They helped him to govern the country. Effie came to live with them.

There was no better or wiser

Bha Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair air a thoirt air beulaibh na banrigh – a mhàthair. Dh'aithnich Fionnghal e. 'Seo do mhac fhèin!' thuirt i ri a piuthar.

Cha robh a' bhanrigh cinnteach. 'Tha a thrusgan is a chlaidheamh coltach ri feadhainn a bha aig an duine agam nach maireann,' dh'aidich i. 'Ach feumaidh mi a bhith cinnteach gur e seo mo mhac mus toir mi a' chathair rìoghail dha.'

Bhruidhinn Coinneach. 'Nuair a bha Eòghann òg, agus sinn taobh Loch Ma-ruibhe,' thuirt e, 'bha Eòghann a' cluich leis an sgithinn agam. Gheàrr e a ghàirdean clì. Ma tha an làrach air gàirdean an fhir seo, bidh sinn cinnteach gur e Eòghann Mac a' Ghobhair a tha ann.' Choimhead e air an fhear òg. 'Cuir do mhuinichill chlà suas,' dh'òrdaich e.

Chuir Eòghann a mhuinichill suas. Bha làrach na tubaist air a ghàirdean. Dh'èirich a' bhanrigh. Chuir i a gàirdeanan timcheall a mic. Rinn a h-uile duine gàirdeachas. Bha Eòghann a-nise na rìgh orra.

Chaidh Coinneach agus Fionnghal a dh'fhuireach ann an rìoghachd Eòghainn. Thug iad taic dha ann a bhith a' riaghladh na dùthcha. Thàinig Oighrig a dh'fhuireach còmhla riutha.

Cha robh rìgh na b' fheàrr no na bu

king than Ewen. The people loved him. But what about the old prophecy that [had] scared the Lord of Castle Donan? That was that a man called 'the son of the goat' would take over his country.

Well, it happened, but through marriage rather than through war. Ewen married the Lord of Castle Donan's one daughter. He was now the leader of a great kingdom.

I started to tell the story by telling you how I found 'the cave of the king's son' beside Loch Maree. Ewen was living there when he was a child, existing on goat's milk.

After my journey, we were returning to the car. We saw three wild goats. They were still living in the area where Earba – the goat that kept Ewen alive – was living. Perhaps they were related to her. It was easy to believe that the story was true!

ghlice na Eòghann. Bha gràdh aig an t-sluagh air. Ach dè mun t-seann fhàidheadaireachd a chuir eagal air Morair Caisteal Donnain? B' e sin gum biodh fear air an robh 'Mac a' Ghobhair' a' gabhail na dùthch' aige thairis.

Uill, thachair e, ach tro phòsadh seach tro chogadh. Phòs Eòghann an aon nighean aig Morair Caisteal Donnain. Bha e a-nise na uachdaran, agus rìoghachd mhòr aige.

Thòisich mi air an sgeulachd aithris le bhith ag innse dhuibh mar a fhuair mi lorg air Uamh Mac an Rìgh taobh Loch Ma-ruibhe. Bha Eòghann a' fuireach an sin nuair a bha e na leanabh, agus e beò air bainne gobhair.

An dèidh mo thurais, bha sinn a' tilleadh don chàr. Chunnaic sinn trì gobhair fhiadhaich. Bha iad fhathast a' fuireach anns an sgìre san robh Earba – an gobhar a chùim Eòghann beò – a' fuireach. 'S dòcha gun robh iad càirdeach dhi. Bha e furasta a bhith a' creidsinn gun robh an sgeulachd fìor!