

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 651 (which corresponds to Litir 955). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about Alex and Archie. Archie was starting to make heather brooms. He pulled heather – a heap of it – and he went home with it. He made a broom but it was incredibly large and heavy.

He went from house to house. But nobody would buy the broom. It was too big. Finally, he saw a white house on a hilltop. He went there. He knocked on the door. A woman came. She was extremely fat. 'I'm selling a brush,' said Archie.

'Oh,' said she. 'I'm looking for a large one. Is your own one big enough for me?'

'This is the biggest broom you'll see,' said Archie. He dropped the broom from his shoulder.

'It's great,' said the fat woman. 'What does it cost?'

'Sixpence,' said Archie.

The woman found a sixpence and she said, 'Here is a magic coin. Every time you spend it, it will reappear anew.'

Archie was happy. He went home with the magic coin and he leaves my account.

But Fat Maggie – for that was the woman's name – well, you'll

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Ailig is Eairdsidh. Bha Eairdsidh a' tòiseachadh air sguaban fraoich a dhèanamh. Tharraing e fraoch – tuilleadh 's a chòir dheth – agus chaidh e dhachaigh leis. Rinn e sguab ach bha i cianail mòr is trom.

Chaidh e bho thaigh gu taigh. Ach cha cheannaicheadh duine an sguab. Bha i ro mhòr. Mu dheireadh, chunnaic e taigh geal air mullach cnuic. Chaidh e ann. Ghnog e air an doras. Thàinig boireannach. Bha i uabhasach reamhar. 'Tha mi a' reic sguab,' thuirt Eairdsidh.

'O,' ars ise. 'Tha mi a' coimhead airson tè mhòr. A bheil an tè agaibhse mòr gu leòr dhomh?'

'Seo an sguab as motha a chì sibh,' thuirt Eairdsidh. Leig e an sguab far a ghualine.

'Tha i sgoinneil,' thuirt an tè reamhar. 'Dè chosgas i?'

'Bonn-a-sia,' ars Eairdsidh.

Lorg am boireannach bonn-a-sia agus thuirt i, 'Seo agaibh bonn draoidheil. Gach turas a chosgas tu e bidh e a' nochdadh às ùr.'

Bha Eairdsidh sona. Chaidh e dhachaigh leis a' bhonn draoidheil agus tha e a' falbh às mo chunntas.

Ach Magaidh Reamhar – oir b' e sin ainm na tè – uill, tuigidh sibh gur e

understand that she was a witch. She had been stuck at home as she did not have a large enough broom for travelling. The other witches were pleased as they didn't like Fat Maggie. She was a bully.

Next day, the witches were meeting in a clearing in a birch wood. They were thinking that Fat Maggie wouldn't be there because she didn't have a broom. Suddenly, however, Maggie appeared on her new broom.

'Ha ha!' she said, 'I'm here now. You'll all do what I want. And in addition, I'm the only one who'll fly home. She went around every other witch. She grabbed everybody's broom and threw them up into the foliage of the birch trees. And you can see them there still – witches' brooms – reminding us of how Fat Maggie threw them there a long time ago.

bana-bhuidseach a bha innte. Bha i air a bhith glaiste a-staigh oir cha robh sguab mòr gu leòr aice airson a bhith a' siubhal. Bha na bana-bhuidsich eile toilichte oir cha robh iad measail air Magaidh Reamhar. 'S e burraidh a bha innte.

An ath latha, bha na bana-bhuidsich a' coinneachadh ann an innis ann an coille-bheithe. Bha iad a' smaoinichadh nach biodh Magaidh Reamhar ann oir cha robh sguab aice. Gu h-obann, ge-tà, nochd Magaidh air an sguab ùir aice.

'Ha ha!' thuirt i, 'tha mi ann a-nise. Nì sibh uile na tha mi ag iarraidh oirbh. A bharrachd air sin, 's e mi fhìn an aon duine a dh'itealaicheas dhachaigh. Chaidh i timcheall a h-uile bana-bhuidseach eile. Thog i sguab a h-uile tè agus thilg i iad suas a dhuilleach nan craobhan-beithe. Agus chì sibh iad an sin fhathast – sguaban bhana-bhuidseach – a' cur nar cuimhne mar a thilg Magaidh Reamhar iad ann o chionn fhada.