

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 680 (which corresponds to Litir 984). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about how the Grey Magician took Gràinne into captivity. Fionn was on the way to the Land of Darkness. He was going to free Gràinne. He was speaking to a mouse when an eagle came from the sky. The eagle grabbed the mouse. But Fionn saved it.

'Thank you, Fionn,' said the mouse. 'Take me with you and I'll help you.' Fionn put it among the folds of his kilt. He reached a sea-strait. He had no way of getting over. The big seal appeared. 'Jump on me and I'll take you over,' said the seal.

On the other side, there were broken stones [that were] like a maze. Fionn wasn't seeing a way through them. He heard croaking above him. The raven was there. 'Look up, Fionn,' said the raven, 'and follow me.' With the raven's help Fionn got through the maze. On the other side of it, he saw the Grey Magician's castle.

There was no way that Fionn could get in. 'I'll go,' said the mouse. The mouse returned with good news. 'There will be a big banquet there tonight,' he said. 'Gràinne is tied to a column with a rope. I'll chew through the rope and I'll lead Gràinne out.'

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu mar a thug am Buidseach Glas Gràinne am bruid. Bha Fionn air an rathad gu Tìr an Dorchadais. Bha e a' dol a shaoradh Gràinne. Bha e a' bruidhinn ri luchag nuair a thàinig iolaire às na speuran. Thug an iolaire grèim air an luchag. Ach shàbhail Fionn i.

'Tapadh leibh, Fhinn,' thuirt an luchag. 'Thoir leibh mi agus bheir mi taic dhuibh.' Chuir Fionn i am measg filltean an fhèilidh aige. Ràinig e caolas mara. Cha robh dòigh aige faighinn a-null. Nochd an ròn mòr. 'Leum orm agus bheir mi a-null thu,' ars an ròn.

Air an taobh thall, bha clachan briste coltach ri cuartan. Cha robh Fionn a' faicinn rathad tromhpa. Chuala e gràgail os a chionn. Bha am fitheach ann. 'Coimhead suas, Fhinn,' thuirt am fitheach, 'agus lean orm.' Le taic an fhithich, fhuair Fionn tron chuartan. Air an taobh thall dheth, chunnaic e caisteal a' Bhuidsich Ghlais.

Cha robh dòigh aig Fionn faighinn a-steach. 'Thèid mise ann,' thuirt an luchag. Thill an luchag le deagh naidheachd. 'Bidh cuirm mhòr ann a-nochd,' thuirt i. 'Tha Gràinne air a ceangal ri colbh le ròp. Cagnaich mi tron

The plan worked well and Gràinne and Fionn made for the shore. The seal helped them to get over. The Grey Magician was in pursuit of them. Fionn remembered the things that Cailleach Ruadh nan Sìthichean gave him. He opened his sporran. He took out the pine needle. He dropped it, and a great thick forest arose between themselves and the Grey Magician. It stopped their enemy for a while.

Next day, the Grey Magician was still following them. Fionn put his hand in his sporran and he dropped the shiny white pebble. A big shining loch appeared. That stopped their enemy for a while.

Next day, the Grey Magician was making for them quickly. Fionn took out the sharp black stone and he dropped it. A large mountain range arose, delaying the Magician. Fionn and Gràinne reached the Red River. And I'll tell you what happened then next week.

ròp agus stiùiridh mi Gràinne a-mach.'

Dh'obraich am plana gu math agus rinn Gràinne is Fionn air a' chladach. Thug an ròn taic dhaibh faighinn a-null. Bha am Buidseach Glas an tòir orra. Chuimhnich Fionn na rudan a thug Cailleach Ruadh nan Sìthichean dha. Dh'fhosgail e a sporan. Thug e a-mach am bioran giuthais. Leig e e, agus dh'èirich coille mhòr thiugh eadar iad fhèin 's am Buidseach Glas. Chuir i stad air an nàmhaid airson greis.

An ath latha, bha am Buidseach Glas fhathast a' leantainn orra. Chuir Fionn a làmh na sporan agus leig e an èiteag ghleansach. Nochd loch mòr gleansach. Chuir sin stad air an nàmhaid airson greis.

Air an làrna-mhàireach, bha am Buidseach Glas a' dèanamh orra gu luath. Thug Fionn a-mach a' chlach gharbh dhubh agus leig e i. Dh'èirich monadh mòr, a' cur dàil air a' Bhuidseach. Ràinig Fionn agus Gràinne an Abhainn Dearg. Agus innsidh mi dhuibh na thachair an uair sin an-ath-sheachdain.