

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 681 (which corresponds to Litir 985). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk.

The Grey Magician was in pursuit of Fionn and Gràinne when they reached the Red River. On the far side was Glenelg and safety. The river was too big to swim over. But Gràinne had a magic jewel in her hair.

Gràinne took hold of the jewel. She asked it to make them a boat. Gràinne and Fionn went in the boat. When the Grey Magician reached the river, the couple were too far out.

Fionn and Gràinne were living in Glenelg. They were expecting a child, but shortly before the day of the birth, Fionn was asked to help Clann Morna. Fionn had promised to help Clann Morna that he would help them if they were in danger.

He was gone three days. In that time, the Grey Magician appeared again and he took Gràinne away against her will. When Fionn returned, he put his finger under his tooth of knowledge. He found out that Gràinne had been transformed. She was now running [through] the forests of Glen Affric as a white hind.

Although the Fianna were often hunting, they never saw a white hind. Twelve years elapsed and, one day, they were hunting near a copse. Bran,

Bha am Buidseach Glas an tòir air Fionn agus Gràinne nuair a ràinig iad an Abhainn Dearg. Air an taobh thall bha Gleann Eilg agus sàbhailteachd. Bha an abhainn ro mhòr airson snàmh a-null. Ach bha leug dhraoidheil aig Gràinne na falt.

Ghabh Gràinne grèim air an lèig. Dh'iarr i oirre bàta a dhèanamh dhaibh. Dh'fhalbh Gràinne is Fionn anns a' bhàta. Nuair a ràinig am Buidseach Glas an abhainn bha an cupall ro fhada a-mach.

Bha Fionn is Gràinne a' fuireach ann an Gleann Eilg. Bha iad an dùil leanabh, ach goirid ro latha a bhreith, chaidh iarraidh air Fionn taic a thoirt do Chlann Mòrna. Bha Fionn air gealltanais a thoirt do Chlann Mòrna gun toireadh e taic dhaibh nam biodh iad ann an cunnart.

Bha e air falbh trì latha. Anns an ùine sin, nochd am Buidseach Glas a-rithist agus thug e Gràinne air falbh an aghaidh a toil. Nuair a thill Fionn, chuir e a chorrach fo a dheud-fios. Fhuair e a-mach gun deach cruth-atharrachadh a dhèanamh air Gràinne. Bha i a-nise a' ruith nan coilltean ann an Gleann Afraig mar eilid bhàn.

Ged a bha na Fianna a' sealg gu tric, chan fhac' iad eilid bhàn. Chaidh

Fionn's dog, became wild. He wouldn't let dog or man, except Fionn, among the trees.

Fionn went it and he found a twelve year old lad. He had no language but the language of the deer. In the middle of his forehead, there was a tuft of deer hair. Fionn understood that this was his son. He called him Oisean. That means 'little deer'.

When Gràinne died, the Grey Magician allowed Oisean to go to the Land of Darkness to bring his mother's remains home. She was now in the form of an old woman. The Fianna made a burial place for her on the summit of a mountain on Skye near Glenelg. We still call that mountain Beinn na Caillich 'the mountain of the old woman'.

dusan bliadhna seachad agus, latha a bha seo, bha iad a' sealg faisg air doire. Dh'fhàs Bran, cù Fhinn, fiadhaich. Cha leigeadh e le cù no duine, ach a-mhàin Fionn, a dhol am measg nan craobh.

Chaidh Fionn ann agus lorg e gille dusan bliadhn' a dh'aois. Cha robh cànan sam bith aige ach cànan nam fiadh. Ann am meadhan a bhathais, bha dos de ghaoisidean fèidh. Thuig Fionn gum b' e seo a mhac. Chuir e an t-ainm Oisean air. Tha sin a' ciallachadh 'fiadh beag'.

Nuair a chaochail Gràinne, leig am Buidseach Glas le Oisean dhol gu Tìr an Dorchadais airson dust a mhàthar a thoirt dhachaigh. Bha i a-nise ann an cruth caillich. Thog na Fianna àite-tiodhlacaidh dhi air mullach beinne anns an Eilean Sgitheanach faisg air Gleann Eilg. 'S e Beinn na Caillich a chanas sinn ris a' bheinn sin chun an latha an-diugh.