

# **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 690 (which corresponds to Litir 994). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*I was telling you about Fearchar a' Ghunna. In terms of food, he wasn't fussy. When he would find a dead rook, he would eat it. He was keen on frogs. But he was taking their eyes out to begin with. He didn't enjoy it when he was eating them that they were looking at him!*

*He was keen on hunting but he had poor aim. One day he was near Castle Brahan when he saw a rook. He fired on it but the bird left in full health. A month later, Farquhar was miles away from Brahan when he found a dead rook that had been killed by a gamekeeper. Our hero picked up the bird. 'Look at this, look at this!' he shouted. 'This is the rook I shot at at Castle Brahan!' And Farquhar ate the bird!*

*Farquhar was walking on a road when he saw an animal. He fired on it, but he didn't damage it at all. But he was of the opinion that it was wounded. He ran after it. All day long he followed it. The animal was keeping a distance between itself and the hunter. Finally, Farquhar reached a house.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Fhearchar a' Ghunna. A thaobh biadh, cha robh e miarraideach. Nuair a lorgadh e ròcas marbh, bhiodh e ga ithe. Bha e measail air losgannan. Ach bha e a' toirt an sùilean asta an toiseach. Cha do chòrd e ris nuair a bha e gan ithe gun robh iad a' coimhead air!

Bha e measail air sealg ach cha robh amas math aige. Latha a bha seo bha e faisg air Caisteal Bhrathainn nuair a chunnaic e ròcas. Loisg e air ach dh'fhalbh an t-eun cho slàn ri breac. Mìos an dèidh sin, bha Fearchar mìltean air falbh bho Bhrathann nuair a lorg e ròcas a chaidh a mharbhadh le geamair. Thog ar laoch an t-eun an-àirde. 'Seall seo, seall seo!' ghlaodh e. 'Seo an ròcas air an do loisg mi aig Caisteal Bhrathainn!' Agus dh'ith Fearchar an t-eun!

Bha Fearchar a' coiseachd air rathad nuair a chunnaic e beathach. Loisg e air, ach cha do rinn e cron sam bith air. Ach bha e dhen bheachd gun robh air a leòn. Ruith e às a dhèidh. Fad an latha a lean e air. Bha am beathach a' cumail astar eadar e fhèin agus an sealgair. Mu dheireadh, ràinig Fearchar taigh. 'Carson a tha thu a' ruith an dèidh m' asail?' dh'fhaighnich fear an taighe.

*'Why are you running after my donkey?' the man of the house asked.*

*'It's a stag I felled on the hill,' said Farquhar. Apparently Farquhar hadn't seen a donkey before that.*

*Sometimes people were taking advantage of Farquhar because he spoke no English. One day he was at the market in Muir of Ord. He saw one of the gentry who spoke no Gaelic. Farquhar knew he had gunpowder. He spoke to another gentleman who did speak Gaelic. 'How do I ask him for powder?' Farquhar asked about the other man.*

*'Oh, say three English words to him,' the other man replied. 'Guard your life. And you'll get plenty of powder.'*

*Farquhar went to the other man. 'Guard your life!' he said to him and the other man fled in fear!*

‘S e a tha ann damh a thilg mi air a’ mhonadh,’ thuirt Fearchar. A rèir choltais cha robh Fearchar air asal fhaicinn roimhe sin.

Uaireannan bha daoine a’ gabhail brath air Fearchar leis nach robh Beurla aige. Latha a bha seo bha e aig a’ mhargaidh anns a’ Bhlàr Dhubh. Chunnaic e fear de na h-uaislean aig nach robh Gàidhlig. Bha fios aig Fearchar gun robh fùdar-gunna aige. Bhruidhinn e ri duine-uasal eile aig an robh Gàidhlig. ‘Ciamar a dh’iarras mi fùdar air?’ dh’fhaighnich Fearchar mun fhear eile.

‘O, can ris trì faclan Beurla,’ fhreagair an duine eile. ‘Guard your life. Agus gheibh thu fùdar gu leòr.’

Chaidh Fearchar chun an duine eile. ‘Guard your life!’ thuirt e ris agus theich am fear eile le eagal!