

# 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 784 (which corresponds to Litir 1,088). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*There was a time when the Cummings and the Mackintoshes were deadly enemies of each other. The Cummings put together a military force. They went to Moy, south of Inverness, an abode of the Mackintosh clan chief. But there was no sign of Mackintosh or his followers. They had gone to an island on Loch Moy. There were four hundred people gathered together on the island. They were safe there, for a while anyway.*

*According to tradition, the Cummings created an unusual plan. The Funtack Burn flows out of Loch Moy. The Cummings built a dam on the burn. On the loch side of the dam were wooden planks. When the level of Loch Moy rose, the island would become covered with water.*

*Even before the loch rose too much, it was obvious to the Mackintoshes that their food was getting scant. One of them came forward with a plan. He received permission to go ahead with it.*

*He built a raft – I imagine, with logs. He made bungs of wood. He took with him string, rope and an auger, to make holes in the planks.*

*He set out in the darkness of the night. He reached the dam. The*

Bha linn ann, agus na Cuimeanaich agus Clann 'ic an Tòisich nan dearg nàimhdean do chèile. Chuir na Cuimeanaich armailt mhòr ri chèile. Chaidh iad gu ruige A' Mhuigh, deas air Inbhir Nis, àros aig ceann-cinnidh Clann 'ic an Tòisich. Ach cha robh sgeul air Mac an Tòisich no a luchd-leantainn. Bha iad air a dhol gu eilean ann an Loch na Maighe. Bha ceithir cheud duine cruinn còmhla air an eilean. Bha iad sàbhailte an sin, airson greis co-dhiù.

A rèir beul-aithris, chruthaich na Cuimeanaich plana car annasach. Tha Allt Fionntaig a' sruthadh a-mach à Loch na Maighe. Thog na Cuimeanaich dàim air an allt. Air taobh an locha dhen dàim, bha dèileachan fiodha. Nuair a dh'èireadh Loch na Maighe, bhiodh an t-eilean air a chòmhdachadh le uisge.

Eadhon mus do dh'èirich an loch ro fhada, bha e follaiseach do Chloinn 'ic an Tòisich gun robh am biadh aca a' fàs gann. Thàinig fear dhiubh air adhart le plana. Fhuair e cead a dhol air adhart leis.

Thog e ràth – tha mi an dùil, le logaichean. Rinn e fàsagan – no *bungs* – de dh'fhiodh. Thug e leis sreang, ròp agus tora, no *auger*, airson tuill a dhèanamh anns na dèileachan.

Dh'fhalbh e a-mach ann an dorchadas na h-oidhche. Ràinig e an dàim.

*Cummings didn't see him. He made holes in the planks. He put a bung in each hole, and he tied strings and rope to the bungs. He pulled on the rope, and the bungs all came out at the same time. Water ran through the holes with force. It swept the dam away. There was a great flood.*

*Unfortunately for the Cummings, they had no watchmen. They were camped directly below the dam. Many of them were killed in the flood. The hero of Moy was not quick enough in paddling his raft away. He was also drowned in the flood. Or the Cummings killed him. He didn't survive, anyway.*

*Is there any truth in the story? I don't know. If I'm telling a lie, it's because I heard it as a lie.*

Chan fhaca na Cuimeanaich e. Rinn e tuill anns na dèileachan. Chuir e fàsag anns gach toll, agus cheangail e sreangan is ròp ris na fàsagan. Tharraing e air an ròp, agus thàinig na fàsagan uile a-mach aig an aon àm. Ruith uisge tro na tuill le neart. Sguabaich e an dàm air falbh. Bha tuil mhòr ann.

Gu mì-fhortanach do na Cuimeanaich, cha robh luchd-faire aca. Bha iad a' campachadh dìreach fon dàm. Chaidh tòrr dhiubh a mharbhadh anns an tuil. Cha robh gaisgeach na Maighe luath gu leòr ann a bhith a' pleadhagaich an ràtha aige air falbh. Chaidh a bhàthadh-san anns an tuil cuideachd. No mharbh na Cuimeanaich e. Cha do mhair e beò, co-dhiù.

A bheil fìrinn sam bith anns an stòiridh? Chan eil fhios a'm. Mas breug bhuan e, is breug thugam e.