

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 851 (which corresponds to Litir 1,155). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Here is a Gaelic story for you from Perthshire called 'The cause of fear of Pàra Mòr [Big Pàdraig]'. There was a smiddy in Ardeonaig on the south side of Loch Tay. Men were gathering there at night. They were telling news and stories – some about ghosts, fairies, urisks and wizards.

The Ardeonaig blacksmith was patient. But he had no patience when it came to Pàra Mòr. Pàra was in the smiddy all the time. He would stay there until the door was closed at the end of the night.

One evening, a young weaver came to the smiddy. He had a broken chain. He was wanting the smith to fix it.

Pàra Mòr appeared. The smith took the weaver to one side. 'I shall be much obliged to you if you give that man a fright,' said the smith. 'I'm exasperated by him.'

'It's a bargain,' said the young weaver. Around nightfall, he took the road home. One the way was an oak tree. The weaver climbed up. He sat on a strong branch. He had his chain.

Pàra Mòr was put out of the smiddy at the end of the night. The

Seo agaibh sgeulachd Ghàidhlig à Siorrachd Pheairt air a bheil Cùis-eagail Phàra Mhòir. Bha ceàrdach ann an Àird Eònaig air taobh a deas Loch Tatha. Bha fìr a' cruinneachadh ann air an oidhche. Bha iad ag innse naidheachdan is sgeulachdan – feadhainn mu thaibhsean, sìthichean, ùruisgean is buidsichean.

Bha gobha Àird Eònaig foighidneach. Ach cha robh foighidinn aige nuair a thigeadh e gu Pàra Mòr. Bha Pàra anns a' cheàrdaich fad na h-ùine. Bhiodh e a' fuireach ann gus an robh an doras air a dhùnadh aig deireadh na h-oidhche.

Feasgar a bha seo, thàinig figheadair òg don cheàrdaich. Bha slabhraidh bhriste aige. Bha e ag iarraidh air a' ghobha a càradh.

Nochd Pàra Mòr. Thug an gobha am figheadair gu aon taobh. 'Bidh mi fada nad chomain ma chuireas tu eagal air an fhear sin,' thuir an gobha. 'Tha mi air mo shàrachadh leis.'

'Is bargan e,' thuir am figheadair òg. Mu bheul na h-oidhche, ghabh e an rathad dhachaigh. Air an rathad bha craobh-dharaich. Shreap am figheadair suas. Shuidh e air meur làidir. Bha an t-slabhraidh aige.

Chaidh Pàra Mòr a chur a-mach às a' cheàrdaich aig deireadh na h-oidhche.

night was dark. Pàra had been hearing lots of anecdotes about supernatural happenings. He was in a state of anxiety walking home. He reached the oak tree.

The young weaver was up high. He dropped the chain on the road. It made a rattling sound. Pàra heard a voice above him – ‘I am the Devil and I’ll have you tonight!’ Pàra was frightened!

He ran as fast as a deer. He reached a house. He leaped inside the door. He fell on the floor in a swoon.

The man and woman of the house went next door. They received advice from the old weaver and his wife who lived there. They were the parents of the young weaver.

The mother went to the young lad’s room. He appeared to be asleep. His snoring would have send the horses to the hill!

.....And Pàra Mòr? He didn’t remain in the smiddy after nightfall ever again!

Bha an oidhche dorch. Bha Pàra air a bhith a’ cluinntinn naidheachdan gu leòr mu ghnothaichean os-nàdarrach. Bha e fo iomagain a’ coiseachd dhachaigh. Ràinig e a’ chraobh-dharaich.

Bha am figheadair òg gu h-àrd. Leig e an t-slabhraidh air an rathad. Rinn i gleadhraich. Chuala Pàra guth os a chionn – ‘Is mise an Diabhal agus bidh thu agam a-nochd!’ Bha an t-eagal air Pàra!

Ruith e cho luath ri fiadh. Ràinig e taigh. Leum e a-steach air an doras. Thuit e air an làr na phaisean.

Chaidh fear is bean an taighe an ath dhoras. Fhuair iad comhairle bhon t-seann fhighheadair agus a bhean a bha a’ fuireach an sin. B’ iadsan pàrantan an fhighheadair òig.

Chaidh a’ mhàthair gu seòmair a’ ghille òig. Bha e a rèir choltais na chadal. Bha srann aige a chuireadh na h-eich ris a’ mhonadh!

Agus Pàra Mòr? Cha do dh’fhuirich esan anns a’ cheàrdaich seachad air beul na h-oidhche a-chaidh tuilleadh!