

## **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 906 (which corresponds to Litir 1,210). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).*

*I'm telling the story 'The Shawbost Freebooter'. Ruairidh Dearg's black cow went missing. Alasdair Morrison and Hugh MacAulay went to look in the freebooter's bothy on the summit of Beinn Mhòr. On the side of the mountain, they found evidence that the black cow was killed there. It was dragged up the slope.*

*The storyteller, Norman Morrison, tells us a little about the freebooter. He was big and strong. He was about twenty five years old, he had black hair and he was handsome.*

*About a week after the loss of the cow, the freebooter was sitting in the bothy at night. A raven came. Usually, that is a marker of danger or death. But it didn't upset the freebooter. He arose, picked up his sword and descended the mountain.*

*When the sun rose, the man was beside Loch Athabhat Mòr. It was in a flat place. The milkmaids were coming from the villages to milk the cows.*

*The man hid until the night came. He found a high bank. There was long heather on the summit. He*

*Tha mi ag aithris an sgeòil 'Ceatharnach Shiaboist'. Chaidh a' bhò dhubh aig Ruairidh Dearg a dhìth. Chaidh Alasdair Moireasdan agus Ùisdean MacAmhlaigh a choimhead ann am bothan a' cheatharnaich air mullach na Beinne Mòire. Air cliathaich na beinne, lorg iad fianais gun robh a' bhò dhubh air a marbhadh an sin. Bha i air a tarraing suas am bruthach.*

*Tha an sgeulaiche, Tormod an t-Seòladair, ag innse dhuinn beagan mun cheatharnach. Bha e mòr agus làidir. Bha e mu chòig air fhichead bliadhna a dh'aois, bha falt dubh air agus bha e eireachdail.*

*Mu sheachdain an dèidh call na bà, bha an ceatharnach na shuidhe anns a' bhothan air an oidhche. Thàinig fitheach. Mar as trice, bidh sin a' comharrachadh cunnart no eadhon bàs. Ach cha do chuir e dragh air a' cheatharnach. Dh'èirich e, thog e a chladheamh agus chaidh e sìos le cliathaich na beinne.*

*Nuair a dh'èirich a' ghrian, bha an duine ri taobh Loch Athabhat Mòr. Bha e ann an àite còmhnaidh. Bha na banaraich a' tighinn bho na bailtean a bhleoghainn nam bò.*

*Chaidh an duine am falach gus an tigeadh an oidhche. Lorg e bac àrd. Bha*

<p><i>went to hide under the heather. He went to sleep.</i></p> <p><i>Two young women came to the loch. It was a beautiful summer's day. The women were about nineteen years old. One of them was Ishbel Morrison, the eldest daughter of the clan chief of the Morrisons. Along with her was her cousin, Peggy Morrison.</i></p> <p><i>They reached the loch's shore. The ground was soft. But there was a high bank, with heather growing on the top. In the loch, the white-flowered water lily was growing. 'Look, Peggy,' said Ishbel. 'I'm going to pick some of these flowers.'</i></p> <p><i>'Be careful,' said Peggy. 'The water is deep. The bottom of the loch is soft. If you fall in, you'll be drowned.'</i></p> <p><i>A large butterfly came. It stopped on the water lily closest to Ishbel. And we'll see what happened then in the next Litir.</i></p>	<p>fraoch fada air a' mhullach. Chaidh e am falach fon fhraoch. Chaidh e na chadal.</p> <p>Thàinig dithis bhoireannach òga don loch. 'S e latha brèagha samhraidh a bha ann. Bha na boireannaich mu naoi bliadhn' deug a dh'aois. B' i tè dhiubh Iseabail Mhoireasdan, an nighean a bu shine aig ceann-cinnidh nam Moireasdanach. Còmhla rithe bha a co-ogha, Peigi Mhoireasdan.</p> <p>Ràinig iad cladach an locha. Bha an talamh bog. Ach bha bac àrd ann, le fraoch a' fàs air a' mhullach. Anns an loch, bha an duilleag-bhàite bhàn a' fàs. 'Seall, a Pheigi,' thuirt Iseabail. 'Tha mi a' dol a spìonadh cuid de na flùraichean seo.'</p> <p>'Thoir an aire,' arsa Peigi. 'Tha an t-uisge domhainn. Tha grunn an locha bog. Ma thuiteas tu a-steach, bidh thu air do bhàthadh.'</p> <p>Thàinig dealan-dè mòr. Stad e air an duilleig-bhàite a b' fhaisge air Iseabail. Agus chì sinn dè thachair an uair sin anns an ath Litir.</p>
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