

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 1 (which corresponds to Litir 305).

Fàilte chridheil oirbh uile. Tha mi a' dol a dh'innse dhuibh anns a' chiad Litir seo mu Iain Dubh Mac Dhòmhnail 'ic Iain. 'S e sgrìobhadair a bh' ann. Rugadh e ann an Gearrloch. Ach bha e a' fuireach ùine mhòr ann an Astràilia – ann am Brisbane.

Là a bha seo, bha Iain a' coiseachd seachad air bùth ann am Brisbane. Anns an uinneig, chunnaic e pàipear-naidheachd à Alba. 'S e an t-ainm a bh' air *The People's Journal*. Ann an Gàidhlig 's e sin *Teachdaire an t-Sluaigh*. Teachdaire an t-Sluaigh. Cheannaich Iain e.

Oidhche a bha seo, chaidh Iain gu cèilidh ann am Brisbane. Dh'iarr fear an taighe air a h-uile duine rann no òran a ghabhail, no sgeulachd innse. Cha robh dad mar sin aig Iain ann am Beurla. Bha a h-uile nì mar sin aige ann an Gàidhlig a-mhàin. Thuir Iain ri fear an taighe nach robh rann no òran aige. Ach cha do ghabh fear an taighe ri sin. Dè bha Iain a' dol a dhèanamh? Bha a h-uile nì aige ro fhada.

Smaoinich e agus smaoinich e. Mu dheireadh, chuimhnich e air rann bheag. Rudeigin a leugh e ann am pàipear-naidheachd. Dè am pàipear-naidheachd? Seadh – Teachdaire an t-Sluaigh. Seo an rann.

Bha bodach am Baile Obair Pheallaidh

'S a thaigh air a thughadh le bealaidh,

Ach dh'èirich gaoth gheur,

'S bha an tughadh san speur,

'S thuir a' chailleach, 'ho-rè, dèan taigh-geal dheth'!

An do thuig sibh sin? Bha taigh aig bodach. 'S e tughadh a bh' aige air mullach an taighe. 'S e "taigh dubh" a bh' ann. Ach cha robh bealaidh math air mullach taighe. Dh'èirich a' ghaoth. Dh'fhalbh an tughadh. An robh bean a' bhodaich – "a' chailleach" – mì-thoilichte? Cha robh! Bha i toilichte! Oir bhiodh mullach ùr aice a-nise. Mullach le sglèatan. Bhiodh "taigh geal" aice an àite taigh dubh. Seo an rann a-rithist:

Bha bodach am Baile Obair Pheallaidh

'S a thaigh air a thughadh le bealaidh,

Ach dh'èirich gaoth gheur,

'S bha an tughadh san speur,

'S thuir a' chailleach, 'ho-rè, dèan taigh-geal dheth'!

Sin agaibh a' chiad Litir Bheag bhuam. Mar sin leibh an-dràsta.

* * * * *

Faclan is abairtean: tha mi a' dol a dh'innse dhuibh: *I'm going to tell you;* Iain Dubh Mac Dhòmhnail 'ic Iain: *black (haired) John, son of Donald, son of John;* sgrìobhadair: *writer;* smachd: *control;* rugadh e ann an Gearrloch: *he was born in Gairloch;* bha Iain a' coiseachd seachad air bùth: *John was walking past a shop;* cheannaich Iain e: *John bought it;* oidhche a bha seo: *this [particular] night ie "one night";* dh'iarr fear an taighe air a h-uile duine: *the MC [lit. man of the house] asked everybody;* rann no òran a ghabhail: *to recite verse or sing a song;* ann an Gàidhlig a-mhàin: *only in Gaelic;* cha do ghabh X ri sin: *X did not accept this;* bha a h-uile nì aige ro fhada: *everything he knew [had] was too long;* rudeigin a leugh e: *something he read;* bha bodach am Baile Obair Pheallaidh: *there was an old man in Aberfeldy;* 's a thaigh air a thughadh le bealaidh: *whose house [lit. and his house] was thatched with broom;* dh'èirich gaoth gheur: *a sharp wind arose;* bha an tughadh san speur: *the thatch was [blown] in the air;* thuir a' chailleach 'ho-rè, dèan taigh-geal dheth': *the old woman said, 'hooray, make a white house of it';* an do thuig sibh sin?: *did you understand that?;* mullach an taighe: *the roof of the house;* taigh dubh: *blackhouse (ie traditional thatched house);* dh'èirich a' ghaoth: *the wind rose;* dh'fhalbh an tughadh: *the thatch left [ie was blown away];* bha i toilichte: *she was pleased;* bhiodh mullach ùr aice: *she would have [get] a new roof;* sglèatan: *slates;* a' chiad: *the first;* bhuam: *from me;* mar sin leibh an-dràsta: *cheerio just now.*