

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 168 (which corresponds to Litir 472). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I'm going to finish the story "The Three Green Dogs". Last week the prince's sister gave her brother poison. He fell dead. The three dogs, Fios, Luaths and Trom, went to the healing well. They got water there. They poured the water on the prince. The prince arose hale and hearty. But the dogs fled. There was no sign of the dogs for a time. The prince was sad.

Another day, the prince was outside. He met a young lad.

"Have you seen three green dogs?" said the prince.

"Yes," said the young lad. "I am Fios."

"You're not," said the prince.

"I am. Strike me with this wand three times," said the young lad, "and I'll become a dog."

The prince did that. And the young lad became a dog. The prince struck him with the wand again and the dog became a young lad again. Then Luaths and Trom came. They were also in the guise of young lads.

"What do you prefer?" said the three to the prince. "Ourselves

Tha mi a' dol a chur crìoch air an t-seann stòiridh "Na Trì Coin Uaine". An t-seachdain sa chaidh thug piuthar a' phrionnsa puinnsean do a bràthair. Thuit e marbh. Chaidh na trì coin, Fios, Luaths agus Trom, don tobar leigheis. Fhuair iad uisge ann. Dhòirt iad an t-uisge air a' phrionnsa. Dh'èirich am prionnsa gu slàn, fallain. Ach theich na coin. Cha robh sgeul air na coin fad ùine. Bha am prionnsa tùrsach.

Latha eile, bha am prionnsa a-muigh. Thachair e ri gille òg.

"Am faca tu trì coin uaine?" ars am prionnsa.

"Chunnaic," ars an gille òg. "Is mise Fios."

"Cha tu," ars am prionnsa.

"Is mi. Buail an t-slat seo orm trì uairean," ars an gille òg, "agus bidh mi nam chù."

Rinn am prionnsa sin. Agus dh'fhàs an gille òg na chù. Bhuail am prionnsa an t-slat air a-rithist agus dh'fhàs an cù na ghille òg a-rithist. An uair sin thàinig Luaths agus Trom. Bha iad cuideachd ann an riochd ghillean òga.

"Dè as fheàrr leat?" ars an triùir ris a' phrionnsa. "Sinn fhèin nar

as young lads or dogs?"

"I prefer you as lads," said the prince. "You'll stay with me now forever."

"We can't," said Fios. "We are children of a king. Our mother died a long time ago. We had a stepmother. She put a spell on us. We were [in our] dogs for a long time. That was until we did the things we did along with you. We're going home now. Come with us. We have a beautiful sister."

They went home. The prince went with them. The prince and the lads' sister got on well together. It wasn't long until they were married.

The prince's sister left. They never saw her again. So the prince and his new wife had the house to themselves. They were wealthy and happy together. And I left them there.

gillean òga no nar coin?"

"Is fheàrr leam sibh mar ghillean," ars am prionnsa. "Fanaidh sibh a-nise còmhla rium gu bràth."

"Chan urrainn dhuinn," arsa Fios. "Is e clann rìgh a tha annainn. Chaochail ar màthair o chionn fhada. Bha muime againn. Chuir i geasa oirnn. Bha sinn nar coin fad ùine mhòr. Bha sin gus an do rinn sinn na rudan a rinn sinn còmhla riut fhèin. Tha sinn a' dol dhachaigh a-nise. Thig còmhla rinn. Tha piuthar bhrèagha againn."

Dh'fhalbh iad dhachaigh. Chaidh am prionnsa còmhla riutha. Chòrd am prionnsa agus piuthar nan gillean ri chèile. Cha b' fhada gus an robh iad pòsta aig a chèile.

Dh'fhalbh piuthar a' phrionnsa. Chan fhaca iad tuilleadh i. Mar sin bha an taigh aig a' phrionnsa 's a' bhean ùr aige dhaibh fhèin. Bha iad beartach is sona còmhla. Agus dh'fhàg mi an sin iad.