

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 385 (which corresponds to Litir 689). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you the story The Lad and the Blacksmith. The princess's head was on backwards. John, the blacksmith, told the King he would correct it.

He cut her head off [her]. He put the head in the fire. The head was turned to ash. John gave a spit. He made the ash into a paste. He put the paste on the girl's neck. But her head did not grow anew.

John was afraid. The guards were outside the smiddy door. He tried it again. It didn't work.

Then he received a cuff on his ear. The young man was behind him. He was wearing green clothes. "I told you," he said, "not to do the thing I did. Sit there."

The young man made a paste of the ash. He put it on the princess's neck. A green light appeared in the paste. A beautiful head arose on the girl's neck. She opened her eyes and smiled. "Come with me, dear," said the young man to her. And the young man gave the smith seven gold coins. "Remember," he said, "don't do it again!"

Then somebody else came to the door. John opened the door. Who was

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an stòiridh *An Gille agus an Gobha*. Bha ceann na bana-phrionnsa tromach-air-shearrach. Thuir Iain, an gobha, don Rìgh gun cuireadh e ceart i.

Gheàrr e a ceann dhith. Chuir e an ceann don teine. Chaidh an ceann na luathre. Rinn Iain smugaid. Rinn e taois dhen luathre. Chuir e an taois air amhaich na h-ighne. Ach cha do dh'fhàs a ceann às ùr.

Bha an t-eagal air Iain. Bha na friceadain taobh a-muigh doras na ceàrdaich. Dh'fheuch e a-rithist e. Cha do dh'obraich e.

An uair sin, fhuair e sgleog air a chluais. Bha am fear òg air a' chùlaibh. Bha aodach uaine air. "Dh'inns mi dhut," thuir e, "gun a bhith a' dèanamh an rud a rinn mise. Suidh an sin."

Rinn am fear òg taois dhen luathre. Chuir e air amhaich na bana-phrionnsa i. Nochd solas uaine anns an taois. Dh'èirich ceann air amhaich na h-ighne. Dh'fhosgail i a sùilean agus rinn i gàire. "Tiugainn, a ghràidh," thuir am fear òg rithe. Agus thug am fear òg seachd buinn òir don ghobha. "Cuimhnich," thuir e, "na dèan a-rithist e!"

An uair sin, thàinig cuideigin eile don doras. Dh'fhosgail Iain an doras. Cò

it but his wife. She was alive! John put his arms around her.

“What are you up to?” she said.

“I want a kiss,” he said.

“A kiss?” she said. “I haven’t had a kiss from you for years.”

“Well, I’ll give you a kiss right now,” said John.

“Stop your nonsense,” she said. She complained about how little money she had. John put his hand in his pocket. He brought out the gold coins.

“Where did you get those, you lazy oaf?” asked his wife.

“Don’t bother about that,” said the blacksmith. “They’re for you. And I’ll get more from the King yet.”

And from that day, John never again said a cross word to his wife. He wasn’t bothered about her bad temper. And he wasn’t bothered about the twist she had in her neck. And he gave her a kiss every night!

bha ann ach a bhean. Bha i beò! Chuir Iain a ghàirdeanan timcheall oirre.

“Dè tha thu ris?” thuirt i.

“Tha mi ag iarraidh pòg,” ars esan.

“Pòg?” ars ise. “Cha d’ fhuair mi pòg bhuat bho chionn bhliadhnaichean.”

“Uill, bheir mi pòg dhut an-dràsta,” thuirt Iain.

“Sguir dhen dol a-mach agad,” thuirt i. Rinn i gearan mu cho beag de dh’airgead a bha aice. Chuir Iain a làmh na phòcaid. Thug e a-mach na buinn òir.

“Càite an d’ fhuair thu sin, a bhumaileir leisg?” dh’fhaighnich a’ bhean.

“Na bodraig le sin,” ars an gobha. “S ann dhuts’ a tha iad. Agus gheibh mi tuilleadh fhathast bhon Rìgh.”

Agus bhon latha sin a-mach, cha tuirt Iain facal feirg a-rithist do a bhean. Bha e coma mu a droch nàdar. Agus bha e coma mun t-sniomh a bha aice na h-amhaich. Agus thug e pòg dhi a h-uile oidhche!